Ballet TODAY

NOVEMBER, 1958

ROWENA JACKSON and PHILIP CHATFIELD

ANTONIO and Rosita Segovia in *The Three Cornered Hat*. London Season reviewed on page 5. *Photo:* Houston Rogers

LA SCALA MILAN in *Romeo and Juliet* Premiere in Venice reviewed on page 15. *Photo:* Giacomelli

DE CUEVAS Co. in *Night Shadow*. Full report of the London Season on page 4. *Photo:* Lipnitzki

Cover portrait
Rowena Jackson and Philip Chatfield in *Swan Lake*
Photo: Houston Rogers

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BACKSTAGE

OUR *Backstage* page photograph this month is a charming study of Beryl Grey with a young French dancer Michele D'Estreez who took classes together with the Bolshoi during the Paris season of the Russian Company.

Beryl danced with London's Festival Ballet during their recent London season, and is still dancing with them on their current tour of the English provinces. Oleg Briansky who partnered her in London is remaining here to have treatment for his injured foot. Kenneth Melville (whose return to England I reported last month) is joining Festival Ballet for their present tour and will dance with Krassovska in their new ballet *Romeo and Juliet*.

Below I print a story from Jean Coquelle in Paris, the truth of which he vouches for.

'The Bolshoi created amongst the French public the most astounding fanaticism—something more than just enthusiasm. Many confused judgments were made. There were vast audiences and the critics were ready to kiss the footprints of these remarkable but not impeccable artists.

The victims of this bias were without doubt the no less admirable dancers of the American Ballet Theatre whose style is totally different. It was outrageously unjust that their short season given at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées was unsuccessful. Only the prodigious Erik Bruhn managed to please to the extent of having the theatre call out for him. Sparing with its approbation, the snobbish and frivolous Parisian ballet public, encouraged by some amazing critics (one of whom even confused *Don Quichotte* and *Casse-Noisette*) could not see the marvellous talent of Lupe Serrano, Scott Douglas or Royes Fernandez. Even Nora Kaye suffered the effects of comparisons which should never have been made.

A large part of the Russian colony in Paris must be counted amongst the numbers of the fanatics, including a lady very much enamoured of ballet who generally has a sure judgment but who on this occasion lost all control.

She was discussing, these "glorious days" with some other less enthusiastic balletomanes and in order to convince them she invited them to be present at a Bolshoi lesson where she caught sight of an admirable dancer near her whom she took as an example.

"Look at the carriage of her head; her arms are marvellous; her lyricism is typically Russian . . ."

Her guests were enchanted. "Ask her name," they suggested, "we do not know her . . ."

And the dancer replied,

"Beryl Grey".'

GOOD CAUSES

Martell, the famous brandy firm are sponsoring an art exhibition in aid of stage, screen and other charities of the Profession. Top personalities whose hobby is painting have been asked to show their pictures and amongst those who have agreed to exhibit are Vivien Leigh, Dirk Bogarde, John Paddy Carstairs, Ernest Thesiger, Irene Handl and Lady Hicks (Ellaline Teriss). Many others are expected to give their support. The Exhibition will be held at the galleries of the R.W.S., Conduit Street, London, W.1, from 2nd to 16th February. All the costs including hire of the galleries, printing and publicity, etc., are being borne by Martell, who are also donating 250 guineas, and it is hoped that some of the exhibitors will allow their paintings to be sold to still further swell the fund.

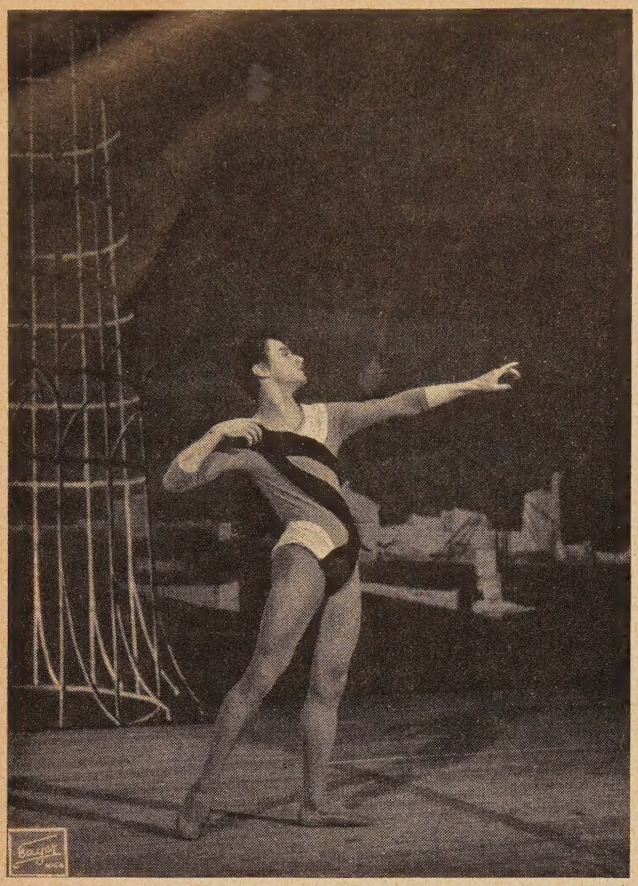
I know that this magazine is devoted to *dancers*, but in printing this notice I hope to catch the eye of other firms who will be inspired to follow Martell's generous offer with similar donations to our own good causes.

In our September issue I reported that at the Annual Meeting of the Royal Academy of Dancing Dame Margot Fonteyn appealed for financial help to assist the Academy in its work, otherwise, she said, they might find themselves in a position in another year's time which might be extremely difficult to retrieve. Many famous dancers have given their services to a Gala Matinée of Ballet to be held at the London Coliseum on Thursday, November 13th at 2.45 p.m. in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Her Royal Highness the Princess Margaret. All proceeds will be in aid of the Royal Academy of Dancing, and tickets can be obtained from Webster & Girling Ltd., 211, Baker Street, London, N.W.1. If you are unable to attend but would like to make a donation to the funds, you can send this to the Gala Secretary, The Royal Academy of Dancing, 15, Holland Park Gardens, London, W.14.

The Royal Academy of Dancing was founded 35 years ago, and exists solely to raise the standard of teaching of ballet here and overseas. In every city and town there are teachers of dancing with the future of thousands of young dancers in their hands. The Royal Academy guides and helps these teachers and has established teaching standards throughout the British Commonweatlh. The Academy has no financial support from the State and has to rely on membership subscriptions, examination entry fees and donations, which are no longer sufficient to meet rising expenses.

At the time of going to press our information on the programme at the Gala is as follows:—Dame Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes

Continued on page 10



LONDON REVIEWS

By Fernau Hall

★ THE INTERNATIONAL BALLET OF THE MARQUIS DE CUEVAS

★ ANTONIO'S SPANISH BALLET COMPANY

★ BALLET RAMBERT AT SADLER'S WELLS

★ SRIMATI RITA'S FAREWELL RECITAL

By Cyril Beaumont

★ YVETTE CHAUVIRÉ AS PRINCESS AURORA

★ SUSANA AND JOSE—By David Benn

TELEVISION—By Helen Ross

Serge Golovine in *L'Amour et Son Destin.* *Pkoto:* Fayer

INTERNATIONAL BALLET OF THE MARQUIS DE CUEVAS

In this company we have an almost unique example of one type of ballet company—the rich man's company. It is not associated with any distinctive pattern of choreography, and its soloists change from year to year like women's fashions. In fact the company exists because the Marquis (who married a grand-daughter of John D. Rockefeller) has fun running it. But the company is rather an expensive hobby. The Marquis stated in an interview with Paul Tanfield of the Daily Mail that every year for 14 years he and his wife have had to make good a deficit of $400,000, making a total of nearly £2,000,000.

Though the Marquis changes his artistic policy a good deal from year to year, he remains faithful to one principle—that of bringing together a number of very expensive stars: at the opening performance at the Coliseum we were given the chance of seeing Nina Vyroubova (for long Etoile of the Paris Opéra), Rosella Hightower, Serge Golovine, Leonide Massine, and a number of other stars of lesser magnitude. It was no accident that the third item in the opening programme, *Pas de Trois Classique*, was danced by Hightower, Vyroubova and Golovine.

Night Shadow made an impression largely because of the effortless grace of Vyroubova in the role of the Somnambulist. This is a curiously unbalanced ballet: all the long proceedings at the ball are dealt with by Balanchine in a desultory fashion, almost as if he were bored with the subject; then, with the entrance of the sleepwalker on her points, candle in hand, the ballet suddenly becomes very good theatre, gripping one's attention as the Poet manoeuvres the sleepwalker about the stage . . . I was glad to notice that at the end Vyroubova carried Golovine for only a few paces: in previous productions I found very distasteful the sight of a fragile ballerina carrying a solid young man.

It was a pleasure to see Massine's revival of his ballet *Gaîté Parisienne*, even though this lacked some of the élan and charm of other productions—largely because Rosella Hightower has few gifts for soubrette roles, and failed to make the heroine (the Gloveseller) as seductive as she should be. But the moment the dancers started to move one was aware that the ballet had been created by a choreographer with a real professional mastery of his subject, able to compose an endless series of movements harmonising perfectly with the waltz-rhythms of Offenbach's music: the contrast with the musical flabbiness of most present-day choreography was refreshingly crisp. Massine himself danced the Peruvian—a grotesque role in clear line of succession from a number of other similar roles he created for himself, such as the Can-Can Dancer in *La Boutique Fantasque* and the Miller in *The Three-Cornered Hat*. From a nostalgic point of view it was exciting to see this great dancer once again, acting superbly. His dancing was good for a man of sixty-four.

As for the rest of the cast, Beatriz Consuelo was outstanding as the Flower Girl, building up her role with intelligence and charm. *Gaîté Parisienne* is by no means one of Massine's greatest ballets, but it makes a fine sparkling end to a programme, and the Marquis did well to add it to his repertoire.

The company includes some excellent male dancers—above all Serge Golovine, a virtuoso who leaps to great heights with no appearance of effort. But, like most of the other men, he has one serious fault: he never pulls up his knees properly, so that his legs never become quite straight. He can do the spectacular difficult things (such as *tours en l'air* and pirouettes) very well: what he needs now is solid work on the simple things.

After the farcical and highly publicised duel between Serge Lifar and the Marquis de Cuevas, it was intriguing to see what sort of new ballet Lifar had produced for the Marquis. In fact *L'Amour et Son Destin*, with choreography by Lifar and Dimitri Parlic and music based on Tchaikovsky's Symphonie Pathétique, showed all the depressingly familiar Lifar mannerisms applied in a routine manner to the pattern of symphonic ballet developed by Massine in the early thirties. Vyroubova, as The Woman, struggled against heavy odds to put some human feelings into the banal role she was allotted : at one moment, when she fell to the ground in despair at the loss of The Man, she gave a hint of what she might achieve in a dramatic role worthy of her talents. In his choreographic ideas Lifar reminds one of Henry Ford, who offered purchasers of the Model T "Any colour, so long as it's black"; this is above all true of the Lifar heroes (who come off the production line with depressingly mechanical uniformity, irrespective of the music or the theme), and Serge Golovine was able to make little of The Man.

It would hardly be possible to imagine any contrast greater than that between *L'Amour et Son Destin* and Vyroubova's performance, the following week, in *Les Sylphides*. Her luminous and poetic dancing reached such heights as one dreams of but rarely sees: appearing at last in a great role which was well suited to her talents, she established herself unmistakably as one of

the greatest ballerinas of to-day. Very sensibly, she followed Pavlova's example in dancing both the Prelude and the Pas de Deux, and was in fact the finest interpreter of Fokine's choreography out of the scores I have seen in a quarter of a century. She even excelled some highly talented artists produced by Fokine himself (such as Riabouchinska, for whom Fokine arranged a new version of the Prelude) and made it possible for us to imagine what was the quality of this great ballet when it was first produced.

Sheer technique is less important in *Les Sylphides* than style and feeling, but the Prelude in particular has some very tricky passages—such as the *posé* on pointe, from which the foot slips down smoothly to a flat position. Most dancers scramble through this step as best they can, trying to keep the inevitable bump as they land as inconspicuous as possible; but Vyroubova made the drop off pointe completely smooth, and the step as a whole took on such amplitude and nobility that it became one of the high-points of the ballet.

A thousand details of interpretation showed that she knew exactly what Fokine intended, and was superbly well equipped to project the right feelings over to the audience. (I can only suppose that she went to some great Diaghilev dancer for guidance : not even Vyroubova could have done so well by instinct alone.) Her arms floated like thistledown, as if gently supported by the music alone, and her head moved through a long series of superb inclinations that gave added mystery to the line of the body. One never felt that she was dancing in time to the music; instead, she traced a musical pattern that weaved itself around the subtle rubato of the music, adding so to speak an extra dimension of rhythm and melody. Of all her magical naunces of phrasing I can only mention two. One was the slow build-up to the final position of the Prelude: here, by holding back on the music, she created exactly the suggestion (intended by Fokine) of listening to the echo of a sigh. The other was her timing of the lifts in the Pas de Deux, in which she made one leg soar quietly over her head in a mist of tarlatan, and then slowed down on landing, with a head tilted back to echo the backward bend of the body earlier in the lift.

Serge Golovine looked splendidly confident and easy in the man's part, to which his soft style was well suited. But alongside Vyroubova's performance (in which every tiny detail of line was impeccable) I found intolerable Golovine's slackness of feet and knees. With such talent, he can do anything he likes—if only he will take the trouble to work properly under good teachers. The other soloists were no more than workmanlike, and the corps de ballet showed little understanding of either the choreography or the music. But none of this mattered so long as Vyroubova was on the stage: then one could look at nothing else.

In New York some of the most exciting dancing I have seen was in the jazz idiom, performed by modern dancers: the emotional range was limited, but the artists moved with a relaxed and rhythmical spontaneity that was very refreshing. For this reason I looked forward to seeing *Le Mal de Siècle*, a jazz ballet choreographed by the American dancer James Starbuck. This had as its sub-title "A souvenir for a future generation," and was intended to express the importance which jazz has for the present generation; the programme note, dealing with jazz jargon, made it clear that the ballet was primarily concerned with the "beat generation." This is the term given in America to young people who drift across the continent in old cars, avoiding regular work and any entanglement with the humdrum everyday world: they are desperate and cynical—and their chief amusement is listening to jazz. Their life has been transcribed in poems and a novel (by Kerouac); but it was very difficult to find any trace of the bitter revolt of the beat generation in Starbuck's ballet. What we saw was a group of ballet dancers (in a variety of costumes) performing neo-classical enchaînements to jazz music arranged for orchestra. Rhythmically the dancing and the music were almost unrelated, and so the result was baffling. One scene, "Play the Field," showed promise: here the solo danseuse (Rosella Hightower), in white all-over tights, showed up brightly in a spot, and was accompanied by dimly-lit men in black; first she appeared in a pas de deux, and then danced with a group of nine men. Here there was some faint suggestion of men searching blindly for an incomprehensible and unattainable goal; but Rosella Hightower danced in too wooden a manner, with none of the supple use of the torso demanded by the music and the theme, and so it was impossible to get a real idea of the choreography.

Diagramme, with choreography by Janine Charrat, represented yet another assault on Bach. This was performed by a group of four men and one girl, in all-over tights and hoods which made them look as if they had escaped from a space-fiction comic strip. The fact that they wore white costumes and danced against a near-white background made it rather hard to see them, and argued an astonishing lack of imagination in both designer (Gerard Munschy) and choreographer. Now and again there was a timid attempt at reproducing the counterpoint of the music on the stage, but invariably this petered out. The movements themselves showed very little feeling for the melodic and rhythmic shape of the music.

ANTONIO AND HIS COMPANY

Ever since Antonio began to form a company in 1953, he has been tackling with determination the problem of creating large-scale forms based on Spanish dancing but suited to large theatres. This year he brought a larger company than ever to one of London's largest theatres, the Coliseum, and it was appropriate that the chief addition to his repertoire for this season should be *The Three-Cornered Hat*—a new version of the famous ballet choreographed by Massine for Diaghilev in 1919.

It speaks volumes for Antonio's grasp of the laws of the theatre that he has been able to make his version good enough to stand comparison with Massine's. In some respects it is better, in others worse, and the overall effectiveness is roughly the same—apart from the fact that at Covent Garden we never see a male dancer in the role of the Miller who can challenge the memory of Massine at his best, or the sight of the Antonio of today. As one might expect, it is in the decor and costumes that the Antonio version is weakest: Picasso's design represented a landmark in the history of stage design, whereas Manuel Mantonolo has a rather inadequate sense of colour, form and period.

Significantly, the best items in the Antonio version are those which remain closest to traditional originals: the Sevillanas danced at the beginning of Part II by almost the whole cast, and the Miller's Farruca. Here we can see Antonio's expertise at its most spontaneous and assured. (He even introduces some novelties into the Farruca which remain true to gypsy traditions of improvisation). But Antonio's choreography for the dramatic scenes is far less satisfactory: when, for example, the Miller's Wife (Rosita Segovia) is supposed to express her sadness after the arrest of her husband, all she does is run around the stage in an aimless manner. Strangely enough Antonio does not exploit here the slower, more Oriental aspects of Flamenco to express sadness. In the same way he neglects the gay, mocking aspects of Flamenco dances such as the Bulerías when he has to show the Miller in comic moods—though in fact he has shown himself a master of this particular gypsy tradition when improvising encores with Flora Albaicin and Carmen Rojas.

Paradoxically, it is to Antonio's credit that he makes less of the Jota finale than Massine. To a Sevillian like Antonio, it must seem extremely odd that this very Andalusian ballet should end with a dance from Central and North Spain: it is almost as if a Cornish ballet should end with a Highland Sword Dance. Antonio extracts himself from this muddle as best he can, performing vaguely Andalusian steps with Rosita Segovia downstage while the corps de ballet get on with their Jota steps at the back; but one can see that his heart is not in it.

The programme continued with *Pas de Quatre* in which we saw a rather odd sort of *baile clásico español:* the dancers wore flat shoes and performed to 18th century music (all of it very fast), but they wore costumes belonging to the middle of the 19th century. Carmen Rollan was outstanding in "Allegro gracioso," using her head most gracefully and timing her movements with the same sort of ravishing crispness that one finds in the dancing of Maryon Lane. The other items in this suite were rather lacking in variety, and suffered from inadequately pointed feet in the executants.

Antonio's *Zapateado*—the only item in the programme not forming part of a ballet or suite—was as exciting as ever. He has a greater repertoire of foot-beats than any other Spanish dancer, and puts them together with real musicality.

In many ways the most unsatisfactory item in the programme was the suite of Basque dances. The fact is that Basque dancing is a male art, demanding great strength and virility: what on earth possessed Antonio to allot these male dances almost entirely to a group of girls? Only Basque men, trained from childhood in the Basque steps, have the necessary looseness for such items as the *grand battement* to a vertical position above the head: the women in Antonio's company showed no more than a shadow of the real thing. And a Basque wine-glass dance without *entrechats* is like a Morris Dance without leaps.

Continued on page 8

BALLET RAMBERT SEASON AT SADLER'S WELLS

(CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH)

THE all-Tudor evenings (11th and 19th September) of the Ballet Rambert at Sadler's Wells fell happily into a period when probably more ballet of any kind—and more new ballet—was being shown in London than ever before. They provided a useful standard of comparison, notwithstanding certain deficiencies in production and performance.

Inevitably the performances suffered from the fact that a Tudor evening is such a rare event. The Ballet Rambert has the regrettable policy of showing its serious Tudor ballets (*Jardin aux Lilas* and *Dark Elegies*) only in London, and not every year at that. The result is that they suffer considerably from being under-rehearsed, and a good many of the dancers show little understanding of Tudor's style; moreover a great many details of the choreography get lost or changed. In view of the fact that to many people in the audience these great ballets must come as something fresh, the programme this year included some notes on the ballets; but Tudor himself always insisted that a ballet must have choreography so clear and expressive that programme notes are unnecessary, and the note which has been attached to *Jardin aux Lilas* is remarkably inept, for it says of this ballet — in which dramatic expression is concise to the point of being epigrammatic—that "There is no particular story . . .". It then goes on to summarise the story: ". . . unless it be that the heroine Caroline, on the eve of marriage to a man she does not love etc., etc." What struck me about *Jardin*, seeing it again after several years, is the extraordinarily natural and inevitable way in which things happen: nothing is laboriously prepared, the patterns of movement flow together and then—suddenly and magically—they crystallise into some new episode which shows a psychic transformation of the protagonists. This is above all true of the moment when the flow of time stops, and we see everything through the eyes of Caroline as she takes farewell of happiness: one of the most exquisite moments in ballet.

The male soloists in *Jardin* have acting rather than dancing roles, and the main weight of the choreography falls on the female soloists. Gillian Martlew made a good try at the discarded mistress ("An Episode in his Past"): she has real dramatic ability, and at long last was allowed to break away from the comedy roles she does so well. But her line was very often wrong, presumably because she had never been adequately produced in this very exacting role. Her instinct was sound, and she never fell into the trap of making the role romantically pathetic (Tudor in fact was very insistent on this point); it would be fascinating to see this fine artist performing the original choreography. Beryl Goldwyn, in the part of Caroline, showed little feeling for Tudor's style.

Judgment of Paris has nearly always been well done by the Ballet Rambert: Madame Rambert understands very well its bitter humour, and usually obtains fine performances from all the soloists. The naturalistic style (more mime than dance, with even the dancing kept deliberately to the level of achievement of tenth-rate night-club dancers) is very different from that of any other Tudor ballet, and the artists can build up their roles without much difficulty. As one might expect, Gillian Martlew was devastating as the languid and bored Venus, doing her absurd dance with the hoops: here was a *fille de joie* that would have delighted Toulouse-Lautrec; Elsa Recagno and Valerie Marsh were less effective than their predecessors in the roles of Juno and Minerva, but they cannot help but improve if they study how Gillian Martlew makes her effects.

The great event of the evening was inevitably *Dark Elegies*, a supreme and unique example of tragedy in ballet: this is classical in the real sense of the word, not in the limited way associated with the Romantic ballet of the 19th century. Rather surprisingly, the First Song—one of the greatest and most exacting roles in ballet—was allotted to the young and inexperienced June Sandbrook. This dancer showed real promise, but failed to give the First Song its proper tragic impact, due mainly to the fact that she clearly had little idea of the proper shape of movements: done wrongly, they naturally failed to convey their true emotional meaning. At one moment, for example, the dancer stands bowed in grief, head resting on clenched fists; then she raises her head, looks from one side to another (as if seeking for a way out from her terrible grief) and follows this with a gesture of the outstretched arm which echoes the movement of the head. But June Sandbrook made the arm movement light and flickering, when it should have been solid, almost heavy: the grief is still there, though the woman is seeking to escape from it. A moment later June Sandbrook made a flicking movement of her right hand beside her left ear (somewhat like an Indian *mudra*) and followed this with a gesture of two hands in front of her waist: here, for once, instinct guided her correctly, and the effect was momentarily superb, giving a good idea of what would be the impact of *Dark Elegies* if it were all performed in harmony with the wishes of the choreographer.

When Tudor had his own company in 1938–39 *Dark Elegies* came to mean a great deal to all his dancers: one might say it transformed their lives, and indeed they came to maturity dancing in it, even in corps de ballet roles. In the new production by the Ballet Rambert one could see the same thing happening: all the corps de ballet dancers had the right facial expressions, and moved with something of the right dignity and simplicity. But, like June Sandbrook, they suffered from lack of contact with the true choreography: when, for example, they pulled an elbow into the waist, they did this in a neutral, formal way, when in fact the elbow must seem to press the waist inward, suggesting the pangs of grief. Norman Dixon had shown by his ballet *Voice in the Wilderness* that *Dark Elegies* means a great deal to him, and he danced the Fifth Song with great intensity, putting his whole soul into the movements. In fact he went much too far, losing the classical restraint demanded by Tudor and allowing his facial expressions to become grimaces; but it was impossible not to be touched by his passionate sincerity. Gillian Martlew in the pas de deux was more successful in achieving the right balance between passion and classical restraint, putting her feelings into her movements rather than into her facial expressions.

By this time Gillian Martlew had danced in three out of three ballets, and it was too much to expect that she should also dance in the fourth ballet *Gala Performance*. However, I missed her superb dead-pan dancing as the arrogant ballerina from Milan; Beryl Goldwyn, who took this part, has unfortunately little sense of humour. The best performance in this charming comedy-ballet was given by Lucette Aldous as the happy-go-lucky ballerina from Paris: she danced this very well, with lightness, strong technique, and an engaging smile. What she lacked was the necessary bounce, which prevented her from bringing out all the humour of the role: but I feel she has fine potentialities, and is likely to develop this role along with her others.

Leaving the theatre, I noticed a poster which described the programme I had just seen as "American." It would be hard to imagine anything more inept and misleading as a description of an evening devoted to the works of the most English of all choreographers: this was rather like describing James Joyce as a Swiss writer.

Reviewing the beginning of the Rambert season last month, I wrote that the company needs ballets growing out of the Tudor tradition if it is to hold its own. In fact the company presented such a ballet later in the season—*Two Brothers*, with choreography by a young dancer in the company, Norman Morrice. Like Norman Dixon's ballet *Voice in the Wilderness*, *Two Brothers* drew strength from its roots in the Tudor ballet *Jardin aux Lilas*, and the two new ballets were comparable in many ways. Both had a strong story, and the young choreographers really came to grips with all the essential problems of choreography: dramatic structure, style, characterisation, relation of movements to music, and so on. Where Norman Morrice gained was in having two remarkable interpreters—Gillian Martlew and himself—and in being able to rehearse a professional company under professional conditions; he also gained from choosing a contemporary theme, which helped him to go further than Norman Dixon in forming a style of his own.

This was particularly true of his use of mime. Tudor has given a clear lead in showing how a new type of naturalistic mime can be combined with fully expressive dance movements to produce a satisfying balletic texture, with the wide range of intensity which is needed if a dramatic work is to make its proper impact. (We cannot watch and react at full intensity for long periods without a break.) What Norman Morrice did was to find a way of making violent young people in the back streets of a city both dance and act in a way which was often completely convincing, even though at times he lost his grip of this style and produced clichés of contemporary neo-classicism that broke the texture.

As the bitterly jealous younger brother, Norman Morrice danced with an admirable baffled and sullen ferocity. At first his movements were erratic and surprising, showing a person unsure of his own feelings and in part bewildered by them: he was particularly good at making leaps in which the twisted leg positions were expressive of the conflicting emotions. As the conflict between the two brothers flared up into physical violence, the choreography became more conventional; but Norman Morrice showed both good taste and imagination by putting the climax to the struggle off-stage,

Right: Lucette Aldous as Coppelia with Norman Dixon as Franz taken during the recent Sadler's Wells season of the Ballet Rambert.
Photo: Laurence Josephs

BALLET RAMBERT SEASON
(*contd.*)

leaving us to imagine what had happened by the reactions of those coming on-stage. (In fact he used the convention of Greek tragedy). Gillian Martlew danced and acted well as The Girl, though it was hardly possible for her to make convincing the sudden shift in the affections of this character. John Chesworth, as the elder brother, showed himself much less at home in the sordid milieu than the other two soloists; the corps de ballet, on the other hand, were excellent, interpreting the wishes of the choreographer with spirit and imagination.

The decor showed a fine understanding of the theme and the laws of balletic design, even though the designer (Ralph Koltai) lacks experience in this field. (He is a teacher of stage design at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, and has designed mainly for plays.) The crumbling walls were convincingly sordid and yet colourful: with the seeing eye of a painter, Ralph Koltai had been able to discover the colours behind the apparent drabness of English city streets, and exploit these colours to give his setting the poetic attributes needed for the fantasy-world of ballet. The costumes were no less successful: with sure taste he managed to make the dancers look contemporary while giving them full freedom of movement and avoiding too specific a reference to current fashions.

The chief defect of this very promising ballet lay in the choice of music by Dohnanyi: this showed a good many changes of pace and mood—changes which the choreographer (as a good disciple of Tudor) mirrored with appropriate shifts in the action—but the whole mood and idiom of the music was quite wrong for a contemporary back-street dance-drama. In fact the theme cried aloud for specially composed music: there are financial difficulties in commissioning music, but artistic progress demands that somehow difficulties of this sort should be overcome.

This programme also included a very interesting revival of Nijinsky's *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*, with Miskovitch in the title role. I have never seen him dance so well: certain defects of his dancing (in particular his aloofness) were so perfectly suited to the role that they appeared as assets, just as happened when John Gilpin created the role of the Witch-Boy. What Miskovitch gave us was an Angry Young Faun: ferociously self-absorbed, showing nothing but contempt for the nymphs, breaking into moods of sudden unaccountable fury. This sounds all wrong—but to a very real extent it worked, making the role come to life as it very rarely does. (Like some other Nijinsky roles, it presents insuperable difficulties to dancers who lack Nijinsky's strange temperament.) Miskovitch even made a brave attempt at tensing the muscles of his neck, as Nijinsky used to do: like Nijinsky he has a very muscular neck, and the movement did give some hint of the effect of the original. Miskovitch also did the walk very well: the strange staccato walk by which Nijinsky suggested the hoof-feet of the faun. The total effect of the performance was intriguing rather than moving, but that is perhaps as much as we can expect until a genius like Nijinsky once again enters the ballet world.

SUNDAY BALLET CLUB

The third programme of the Sunday Ballet Club, given in London on September 14th, resembled the second in presenting one ballet showing real feeling for choreography alongside a number of other works by young dancers who clearly had no idea of the meaning of the word "choreography." I can think of no other art in which anything comparable could happen—except, perhaps, in action painting, where ignorance of even the rudiments of technique is sometimes apparent.

Sketchbook for Dancing produced by Terry Gilbert with dancers from the Festival Ballet, followed the familiar pattern of classroom ballets, differing from its predecessors only in two ways: it brought together an almost incredible hotch-potch of music (by Leopold Mozart, Stravinsky, Britten, Josquin des Prés and Rachmaninov), and it provided a few heavenly moments of Deirdre O'Conaire, a dancer so graceful and musical that she can make the most pedestrian arrangement of classroom steps look like part of a real ballet. She won a well-deserved ovation from a highly professional audience (consisting largely of dancers).

The Cycle, with choreography by Anna Paskevska and dancers drawn mainly from the Western Theatre Ballet, had a theme which might have amounted to something if imaginatively treated—that of the stream of life, with its age-old cycle of creation and destruction. But the treatment was extremely naïve—the characters consisted of Life, Man, Woman, Child and New Woman—and the choreography was totally inexpressive. There was no attempt at all to create a style in harmony with this cosmic theme: instead, we saw a few dancers in, all-over tights (decorated with stripes) performing the same old classroom patterns.

The Uninvited Guest, with choreography by Ronald Yerrell and dancers from *My Fair Lady*, was in its own way just as ineffably naïve as *The Cycle*; but at least it provided some moments of rollicking unconscious humour as it attempted to produce a balletic equivalent of the horror films so popular today. First there was a highly conventional ballroom-scene, in which the only interest was provided by the blazing good looks of Willow Stockdale: she must learn to point her feet better if she is to appear in "legitimate" ballet, but she has a charming personality, and may go far. Then a kind of Charlatan in glamorous silken rags brought on a mysterious figure in green, with goggle-eyes: this was a cross between Petrouchka, Robby the Robot and Frankenstein's Monster. Inevitably, he danced with the Fiancée; and inevitably, he strangled her. Then the monster fought with the men, bowling them over without effort; finally he disappeared behind a screen and his inventor produced his cloth body, tearing it to pieces with gusto.

The evening ended with *Le Farceur*, choreographed by Clover Roope and danced by artists from Covent Garden. This had a simple story of four school-girls in search of adventure in Paris, and was clearly modelled by some extent on *Gaîté Parisienne*. But Clover Roope chose her music very well, and the theme was within her understanding, so that she was able to keep the action flowing with appropriate nec-classical patterns. One role, that of Albert le Farceur, was more than just appropriate: this was danced by Patrick Hurd with a great deal of spirit and a technique strong enough to let him concentrate on interpretation, so that whenever he was on stage everything went with a swing. When Clover Roope came on the stage at the end I could not help regretting that she had not cast herself in her own ballet, for she has far more talent than any of the girls she selected, and could certainly have created a female role able to stand comparison with Albert. Even so, the ballet had a number of enjoyable episodes and was very well received by the audience.

FERNAU HALL

YVETTE CHAUVIRÉ AS PRINCESS AURORA

By

CYRIL BEAUMONT

A special feature of the Royal Ballet's recent season at Covent Garden was the appearance of the French ballerina, Yvette Chauviré, as guest artist, in the principal roles in *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, Act II, *Les Sylphides*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Chauviré's Giselle is famous; her Odette is well known; but the role of the Princess Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty* was for her an adventure, since she had never before attempted it. There are few experiences more trying for a ballerina than to interpret a famous role for the first time. In this case, comparisons with Fonteyn, whose mature and sensitive rendering has become almost traditional in the mind of ballet goers, would be inevitable, and Chauviré would have the additional disadvantage of appearing with an unfamiliar company.

Chauviré is a little under medium height, with slender arms, responsive from shoulder to finger-tips, and lovely legs. She has two slight defects: square shoulders, which worried one of her early teachers, Nicholas Guerra, and a neck shorter than that of the ballerina ideal, sometimes to be found in dancers with an exceptional facility for "turns." Yet, just as Taglioni transformed her abnormally long arms into a virtue, so Chauviré has made her shoulders and neck into a potent means of expression. Her features are of classic mould; her eyes are large and luminous, the iris surounded with an expanse of white which so well lends itself to mime. The delicately tip-tilted nose belies the firm lips; her hair is swathed about her head like a cap, covering her ears.

In the Garden Scene, Chauviré makes her first entrance with her movements and features radiating happiness. The accent is French, which is perhaps not inapposite in a French fairy tale. And, while her greeting to her parents is respectfully filial, she exhibits a charming *moue* of surprise on being told by her father that she is growing up and that it is time for her to marry, and that several princes have arrived to ask for the honour of her hand. Her manner to her suitors, however, suggested a woman rather than a young girl; yet her elegant coquetry and 18th century grace brought to mind one of those seductive ladies painted by Boucher or Fragonard.

In the first test, the *Rose Adage*, she rendered those difficult *équilibres* well, being firm and steady, and I was pleased to see that in the final phase she presented the roses to the Queen and did not throw them—an action which to me seems a breach of politeness.

In the second solo she seemed a little nervous, but all her pirouettes and "turns" were executed with speed, precision, and finish. Her *bourrées* were smooth.

When Carabosse offers her the prohibited spindle, how eagerly her curiosity is aroused, and how excitedly she accepts—teasing her alarmed parents who vainly strive to make her surrender it. Then, as she retreats waving the spindle, she pricks her finger. Her mingled surprise and alarm, her feeling of pain, her child-like seeking to be comforted by her parents, her feeling of faintness, her seeming recovery, her slowly emerging smile, like sun after rain, her rising to her feet, her first steps which suddenly falter as she is seized by a fresh wave of faintness which makes her dizzy, her circular bounds which grow wider and wider, emphasising her mounting delirium until suddenly she swoons to the ground, are all admirably conceived. I have seen many famous dancers in this famous passage of mime, but Chauviré surpasses them all.

In the Vision Scene, Chauviré's first appearance as a fleeting vision of head and shoulders among the foliage was not well posed, the raised hand partly obscuring her face. This was corrected at the second performance. I prefer Aurora's features to be expressionless, to differentiate between Aurora living and Aurora phantom. Chauviré allowed herself a slight degree of facial expression, mainly in the eyes, but the tilt of her head, neck and shoulders were most eloquent. She has a nice sense of line, although her always authoritative movements are sometimes sharp, rather than flowing. She uses her arms beautifully. The timing of her beckoning and evasion of the Prince, repeated with variations of pose and direction, was unusually skilful. She also danced well the concluding solo, although she naturally could not assimilate all its subtleties of timing and quality of movement in so brief a time.

The Awakening Scene, as frequently happens, was spoilt by over-quick black out. We saw her awake, look about her in surprise, see the Prince and admire his handsome features, but, just as there developed a spontaneous mutual affection and she was about to embrace him, darkness descended. At the second performance, the same defect resulted.

Normally this brief episode is all we see of the couple's first meeting and falling in love, and no romance could be briefer. But Chauviré devised a simple means of linking this with the last act. When the re-awakened King and Queen and their assembled court await the entry of the newly-betrothed pair, the Prince and Princess pause on the threshold, look at each other, and she tenderly presses his hand for their mutual confidence; then they face front, descend the steps, and bow to their audience.

Admirably partnered by Alexis Rassine as the Prince, she performed the difficult "fish-dives" brilliantly and with *panache*. The latter solo she invested with a novel piquancy, the movements of her wrists and hands having a gaily decorative quality, like the grace-notes in music.

When you consider the quality of her interpretation in relation to a first appearance in a classic role previously unknown to her, Chauviré's rendering must be accounted a remarkable achievement. A pleasing aspect of the performance was the obvious interest of the company in the ballerina's rendering, and their determination to afford her every support: from their association a mutual esteem and affection has developed. May she soon return.

ANTONIO—*Continued from page* 5

The programme really came to life—as Spanish programmes normally do—with the Cuadro Flamenco at the end. Though Flamenco dances belong in theory to the smoky atmosphere of a café or gypsy cave, they are so superbly theatrical that they carry up to the furthest rows of even a huge theatre like the Coliseum. And this Cuadro Flamenco (entitled *La Taberna del Toro*) was distinguished by the finest Farruca I ever have seen, danced by Antonio's nephew Paco Ruiz. He was very good last year: now, the very first stamp of his feet shakes the theatre, and establishes him as one of the finest Spanish dancers of today. The Farruca is above all a dance of violent contrasts—of tempo, tension and line—and Paco Ruiz extracts the utmost force and fiery virility from all these contrasts.

Carmen Rojas, plucked by Antonio out of the corps de ballet when Flora Albaicin left, has now developed into a fiery and expressive Flamenco dancer. In "Taranto" she scowled and stamped and whirled her long skirt with the right sort of bravura; she still lacks what the gypsies call *duende* (demon), the ecstasy of improvisation which seizes Flamenco dancers when all goes well, but her progress does great credit to Antonio as teacher and producer.

SRIMATI RITA'S FAREWELL RECITAL

On 13th September, under the auspices of the Indian Arts Society, Srimati Rita gave a farewell recital at Conway Hall before leaving for a tour on the Continent. This time she presented a well-balanced programme in three sections: one devoted to Manipuri, one to Bharata Natyam and one to Kathakali.

The most interesting novelty was a varnam. This is the traditional *pièce de résistance* of a Bharata Natyam recital, and in India it may last anything from forty minutes to an hour and a half: Srimati Rita sensibly cut her varnam to twenty minutes, preserving strictly the traditional balance between pure dance and dramatic dance. This varnam, like so many of the best of these devotional dances, is extremely sensual in its imagery, the dancer expressing her devotion to the deity in very passionate language—speaking, for example, of the arrows of desire which have penetrated her heart. (This is in line with the greatest traditions of Hindu art). To make clear the meaning of the mudras Srimati Rita recorded a commentary in English which came in over the music, just as she did for the great Kathakali dance-scene *Putana*. Those same gifts for dramatic expression which she showed in previous recitals in *Putana* were equally apparent in the varnam, which she danced with a marvellous combination of power and delicacy, passion and subtlety, and her performance of *Putana* was this time even better then before.

I regret that in the July issue Srimati Rita's name was wrongly spelled "Sita."

A review of Yvette Chauvire's performance of *Giselle* during her recent Covent Garden season was reviewed by Fernau Hall in our October issue.

Susana and José. *Photo:* Gyenes

TELEVISION REVIEWS

Sunday 14th September—B.B.C. Television—Night Shadow.

Short one act ballets presented in their entirety are ideal for television. *Night Shadow*, with choreography by Balanchine, and danced by the International Ballet of the Marquis de Cuevas proved this point. Among the artists appearing in the programme were Vyroubova, Golovine and Daphne Dale. Vyroubova danced the part of the Sleepwalker most movingly and Golovine as the Poet expressed his despair with feeling. The camera shots of the ball scene taken from above were very effective and I liked the captions at the end with the name and face of the artist shown to the audience. The production was by Christian Simpson.

Sunday 14th September—B.B.C. Television—Monitor.

Leonide Massine who is visiting London and appeared with the Marquis de Cuevas Ballet was interviewed by Kenneth Allsop. He told briefly how he had trained at the Bolshoi Theatre School, and how he came in contact with Diaghilev when Diaghilev came to Moscow to look for someone to take over the title role in *The Legend of Joseph*. Diaghilev chose Massine for this and he joined the company as a replacement to Nijinsky. He said his relationship through the year with Daighilev was rather stormy, but as at the time he was a young man and Diaghilev was a dynamic, strong personality there were bound to be clashes. Now that he is older he realises what a colossal and immense figure Diaghilev was. He brought about the fusion of all the great arts, and it is by this principle that Massine always tries to create. He has created over 70 ballets and is in the process of writing a book which will be a textbook analysing the movements of the body and trying to establish a theory of the movements in dancing. Massine then had Lucette Aldous demonstrate how a greater "harmonic effect" can be obtained by slight differences in the line and poise of the body. It is these effects and the effect of rhythmic force which he will be analysing in this new textbook. He hopes that this system will be adopted as he feels that dancing must be taught in an entirely new way. He concluded by saying that this formula for ballet will be a revelation and a guide for choreographers which is badly needed in the decadent and sterile state of ballet as it is today.

Tuesday 23rd September—Granada—Chelsea at Nine.

In this welcome return of a new series of this popular programme Jacques Chazot, partnered by Réné Bon, gave a hilarious version of the Black Swan Pas de Deux from *Swan Lake*. I found this a most amusing item as well as a very clever one. Chazot displayed a remarkable feat by dancing this on full point and including the 32 fouettés. In his interpretation he poked fun at the styles of many of the great ballerinas who have performed this role. Réné Bon as the Prince did not attempt any comedy effects and danced his variation with ease and brilliance. The programme concluded with an appearance of the fabulous Maria Callas whose remarkable talents and artistry are bound to captivate any audience.

HELEN ROSS

SUSANA AND JOSÉ

Those who expected to see another Antonio or even another José Greco will have been disappointed. Those who went to Sadler's Wells Theatre prepared to judge this show on its own peculiar merits will have found some satisfaction.

After we had sat respectfully while they paid their customary deferences to Goya's interpretation of the memory of Phillip II (who has been dead some three hundred years, in life a neurotic and fanatical monarch, who did more than any other ruler to ruin the Spanish Empire: isn't it time we buried him?) we got down to business.

Both these dancers have had a training in classical ballet and so they were able to meet us on our own terms. José has an abundance of that remarkable gift with which a handful of dancers such as José Greco, Antonio, Anton Dolin and Anya Linden have been born and which can seldom be acquired; stage presence. I think it was this rather than the quality of his dancing which caused him to be brought back again and again for encores. Talking of encores Sernita de Jerez has, in a minor way, made history. I can remember no other occasion when a flamenco singer has been asked for an encore in this country.

Lack of décor inevitably detracted from the value of the performance but the artistic, even if rather obvious, use of lighting went a long way towards compensating for this. I had thought that the only lighting director who cared to take the trouble to be an artist as well was Michael Northern. It seems I can eat my words !

Naturally the majority of the dances came from Andalusia. But *Don Juan* gave us a dance from Aragon and one from Majorca: and they were at home with both of them. One didn't feel, as is so often the case, that here was an Andalusian taking the required notice of the other regions of Spain. But the highlight of the programme was as Andalusian as the Sierra Nevada. A *zapateado* by José, although with too much use of the hands, even broke down the reserve of the English audience. Quite conventionally, and perhaps inevitably, the show ended with the *cuadro flamenco:* a very unadventurous one but, like Pepita Saraszena, they made no attempt to give us more than a brief overall picture of an aspect of the visual arts of Spain, and in this completely unpretentious object they completely succeeded. It is to be hoped that they will visit London again.

DAVID BENN

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Plain Words

THREE days before the commencement of their London season the Directors of the Edinburgh International Ballet Company announced that owing to a marked lack of public support the season was to be cancelled. They went on to say that less than 4 per cent. of the possible total receipts for the season had been taken up in advance bookings despite the fact that the Company received excellent notices at the Edinburgh Festival, and all the famous guest artists who created the ballets at Edinburgh were due to appear in London.

This is a very sad state of affairs for the Company, and one can only feel the deepest sympathy for all the fine artists concerned in the production of their twelve new ballets and the shattering of their ambitious plans for the future, but it does seem that Londoners have at last made it quite clear that they will only pay to see what they *want* to see.

Why did they lack enthusiasm for this particular Company ? It cannot be put down to a surfeit of ballet at the time of opening, for only one other dance group would have been in town during their season. They did not lack stars for some of the finest dancers in the world were to have appeared. They did not lack novelty for there were twelve entirely new ballets to be seen.

I think the truth is that it was not only *this* Company that Londoners shunned, I don't think they want *any* small Company. They want a big company in the right surroundings with their favourite ballets in the repertoire. This little Company, without the aid of a subsidy and forced to worry about box-office receipts has merely brought the true state of affairs into the open. During the past year I have been present at London seasons given by small Companies, English and foreign, and as I have looked around at the empty seats I have wondered why they continue to do it. I know all the stock excuses "it was an artistic success, if not a financial one," "if the art is to live artists must do something new and not dance *Swan Lake* for the rest of their lives," and I also know that gauging the public taste is a very difficult thing. People who have spent all their lives in producing plays make costly mistakes time after time, so there is no ready-made recipe. Without the aid of a Gallup poll however certain signs emerge. From audience reaction, and by that I mean the comments of the man next to me—not the bravos of the friends of the star—and from what people write to me, certain criticisms are levelled again and again, and for what they are worth I set them down more fully.

First—*the right setting*. People want a theatre within easy reach of the West End, so that they can have a meal at a reasonable hour before they go in. An audience is not composed of Londoners only, there are many who travel from the suburbs, and even people working in London do not want to be in their seats by 7 o'clock. I once sat next to a young couple who applauded furiously up to the second interval, and then the man said : "I can't wait any longer, I must go out and get something substantial to eat—I'm hungry."

Secondly the public, now used to big-scale entertainments want only big Companies. Without the aid of adequate decor, beautiful costumes and a corps de ballet much of the glamour of ballet is lost, and the public are not thrilled by what they see. Quite often they feel that they are not getting value for their money, and going to the ballet, even in the most inexpensive theatres, is quite a costly way of spending a night out. Thirdly, I believe that people are being put off new ballets because nine times out of ten they are bored to death with them. This could explain why the public did not even give the Edinburgh International Ballet a chance to show their twelve new ballets, excellent though their reviews were at the Edinburgh Festival. Of course there are always those who know what an incomprehensible ballet is all about, one critic recently claimed that he knew the story of a certain ballet which everyone else thought was plotless, but is it not the job of the choreographer to make himself understood and not indulge in some private joke with the dancers ? Not many people are interested in the *art* of movement, steps cleverly strung together may delight the initiated, but unless the uninitiated know something about it too they are bound to get restless. You can't hope to fill a theatre with the experts.

Why does the public prefer the classics? The stories are, by modern standards, old-fashioned, corny, unreal, but the characters portray love, sorrow, death, the triumph of right over wrong and happiness—emotions which have interested and thrilled humanity since the beginning of time.

I do not believe a ballet is doomed to failure because it has no witches, evil magicians or sugar-plum fairies. Ballet has its own part to play in portraying the present day world, but with a few exceptions, I do not think those who "dream up" present day ballets are in touch with that world. Perhaps, like many artists in the past, they are ahead of their time—but almost without exception those artists died in penury. At this point you might well say : "but what would the history of art have been without these great ones—their work has remained as an example to future generations." All of which of course is very true and if the producer had only himself to think of it would be up to him to decide whether he preferred to follow his own ideas for their value to posterity, or whether he should study public opinion. But he has not only himself to consider, the careers of others depend on his efforts, and dancers—uncomplaining, hard-worked, underpaid people as they are—are still like other folks in that they have to eat.

Film-makers faced with the competition of television and a landslide at the box-office have at last realised that the public will flock in their thousands to see something they *want* to see, but nothing will cajole them away from their own firesides if they are disinterested. With this in mind the Rank Organisation have decided to close many of their cinemas and run "popular" films for longer periods at the remaining theatres.

Although this is a drastic solution leading to even more unemployment amongst artists, it comes to the same thing in the end if audiences lose interest and dwindle away.

If you believe that choreographers should not work for popular appeal, that public taste is so limited that it will gradually lead to the decline of the arts, you can easily find examples in the past to illustrate your point—George Bernard Shaw was not always a success—that he was not afraid to flout public opinion is an irrefutable fact, but remember we live in a different age. People went regularly to the theatre at one time because there was very little else to do, nowadays everything is brought to their homes and they don't have to stir a foot outside for entertainment—and they most certainly won't stir unless you offer them something to interest them.

Of the three major companies in England only one actually pays its own way via the box-office—the Festival Ballet, and their "pandering to public taste" is often criticised, but, no doubt, as Liberace is said to have retorted to his critics, they "cry all the way to the bank."

In conclusion I would make it clear that I am not advocating an endless diet of the classics for evermore, but, and I cannot say it often enough, until new ballets are as interesting and comprehensible as the old favourites then the bulk of the ballet-going public will suffer mental indigestion and lose interest. Their refusal to support this gallant little Company could be a warning signal that Londoners have issued something in the nature of an ultimatum. **E. H.**

BACKSTAGE

(*CONTD. from page* 3)

will be appearing in *Ondine*, conducted by Hans Werner Henze himself, Yvette Chauvire will be partnered by Youly Algaroff in the Auber *Grand pas Classique*, Henning Kronstam and Kirsten Simone will be together in the pas de deux from the second act of *La Sylphide*. Ballet Rambert are sending Lucette Aldous and Norman Morrice to do the second act Doll Dances from *Coppelia*. Mona Inglesby will dance in the Rose Adagio and the programme will end with the Festival Ballet led by John Gilpin and Anita Landa in the new (nameless) Ballet by Paddy Stone. Antonio and Alicia Markova will also appear but no details were available at our press date.

STOP PRESS NEWS—Antonio is to appear in The Royal Variety Show

CONVERSATION PIECE

At a Press Reception held for Antonio on his arrival in London

"How old are You?"

"Old, *very* old."

"How is it you have remained single?"

"I *want* to get married."

"Have you anyone in view?"

"Yes, *many* in view."

"Where do you find the audiences most receptive?"

"In *England* of course, here they throw flowers, in my country they throw hats."

"And what happens to these hats, do they sneak around backstage to collect them afterwards?"

"No I always throw them back."

(*It isn't only hats Antonio can throw back, he doesn't do so badly with his answers either*).

in CINÉ BIJOU

Above: With Milorad Miskovitch in *Salome*. This photograph w taken in Japan where with a group of American dancers th had toured the principal cities, and had also danced Honolulu and the Philippine Islands.

Left: With Roland Petit, rehearsing for television

Colette Marchand

BEFORE entering the Opéra school, Colette Marchand was young girl with a dancing demon inside her. Long before sh put on her first ballet shoes, she was already dancing, doing h best to hold ballerina-like poses in front of family photograph "Wherever could I have got that idea from," she asks herself musing in front of one of these souvenir photos. "There were no artists my family in any case. . .

She joined the Opéra and very soon distinguished herself. One da Serge Lifar very worried by the illness of one of his danseuse, sent h the following telegram:—

—Marchand, venir ce soir à théâtre, faire terrible maquillage pou sorcière dans *L'Amour Sorcier*. Pas le temps apprendre. Vou sera très bien.—

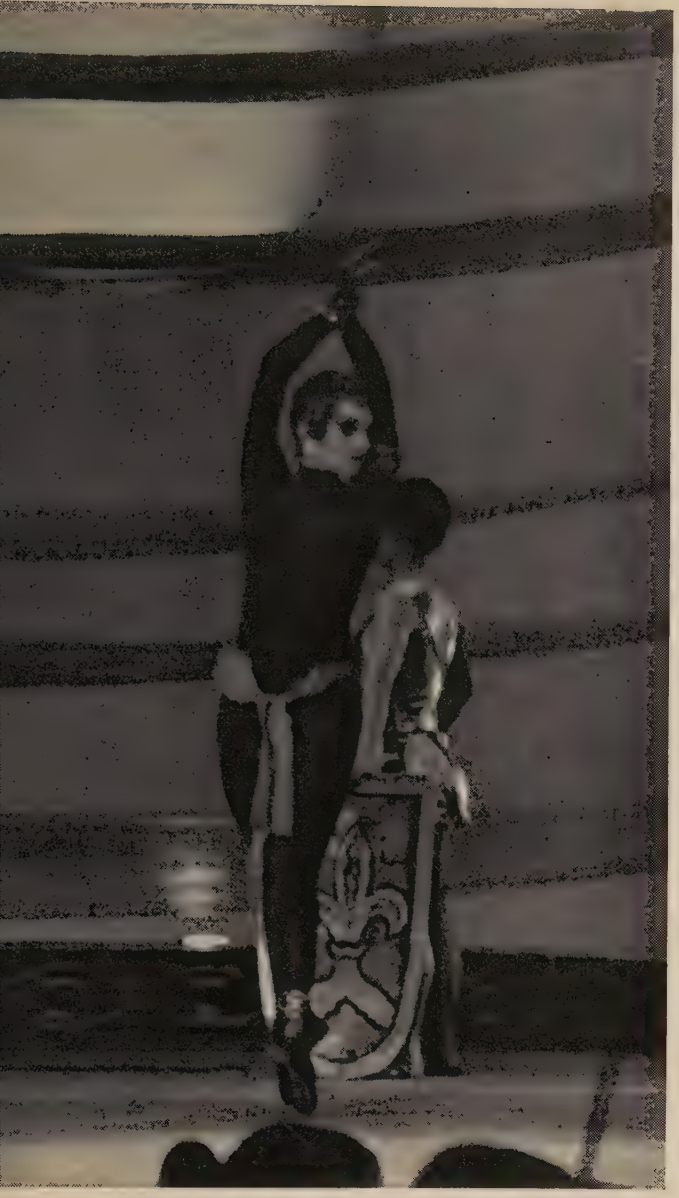
Thus a young girl of 14 boldly made her entrance on stage to pla a part which she did not know.

After she had been seen in *Entre deux Rondes*, *Le Chevalier* (*la Damoiselle* and *Sylvia*, Colette Marchand left the Opéra where h personality ran the risk of being stifled.

Colette Marchand is a born comedienne. Her face changes s much from one role to another that it is very difficult to believe th it is the same person. She can, all by herself, hold the attention the audience with her singing as well as her dancing, moving arou on stage like a seductive demon creating a healthy gaiety which too often lacking in ballet spectacles.

Ciné Bijou was a failure. However, it showed Colette Marchan kicking off her shoe which was hurting her, posing for photographe singing "Je suis venue toute nue sous mon manteau" all with goo humour and no trace of vulgarity, taking as much pleasure as t audience in what was happening on stage. . .

Colette lives in the rue de Dunkerque in Paris and is the wife of young orchestra conductor Jacques Bazire, and they are the pro owners of a Siamese cat "Godot."



Top Right: Colette at the age of six, on holiday at Chatel Guyon.

Right: The first walk-on part, in *Love, the Magician* at the Paris Opera, at the age of 14

1947

When she left the Opera in 1947 she was already a soloist, and the Metropolitan Ballet of London engaged her as a star. With them she danced *Les Sylphides*, *Lac des Cygnes*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Pygmalion* (Gsovsky), created her role in *Danses de Galanta* (Kodaly-Gsovsky) *Romeo and Juliet* (Tchaikovsky-Lifar).

Later she toured in Great Britain with a group consisting of Rene Jeanmaire, Vladimir Skouratoff, and Serge Perrault. *La Peri* (Dukas-Lifar) *Romeo and Juliet* and *Lac des Cygnes* were in their repertoire.

1948

Ballets de Paris de Roland Petit

Les Demoiselles de la Nuit (after Margot Fonteyn) toured with this Company in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and England.

1949

Second season with the Ballets de Paris

Created *Combat* (Dollar-De Banfield-Marie Laure).

Created *L'Oeuf à la Coque* (Francaix-Petit-Lepri) departed for New York.

1950

Third season with the Ballets de Paris

Carmen (after Jeanmaire).

1951

In this year Marchand went into a Broadway show *Two on the Aisle*. Then Guest Artist to Ballet Theatre, afterwards at the Metropolitan Opera at New York to dance *Les Demoiselles de la Nuit* which she had created.

1952

With Festival Ballet as Guest Artist

Danced *Lac des Cygnes* at Monte Carlo.

Plein Feu (a revue in which Maurice Chevalier appeared) at the Empire Theatre in Paris.

Appeared in the film *Moulin Rouge* (directed by John Huston).

1953

Ballets de Paris de Roland Petit

Created her role in *Ciné Bijou* (Damase-Beaurepaire-Petit).

Carmen, created her role in *Deuil en Vingt Quatre Heures* (Thiriet-Clave-Petit).

1954

Films *Par ordre du Tsar* and *L'Etalagiste* with Milorad Miskovitch.

1955-56

Revue a Grand Spectacle in Italy with Walter Chiari and Serge Perrault.

Fête du Prince at Monte Carlo: *Suite New Yorkaise* (Monfred, Taras, Levasseur).

1957

Toured South America with Les Ballets 57 of Milorad Miskovitch and Irene Lidova.

Created *La Griffe* (Serrete, Taras, Alwyne, Camble).

Created *Soirée Musicale* (Rossini-Taras-Levasseur) Rio de Janeiro

Text by JEAN COQUELLE

News from the World

LUISILLO and his Company are still in Australia and when this present tour ends in Sydney on the 26th January, 1959, they will have played sixty consecutive weeks between this country and New Zealand. From Australia they will go to Japan, returning to Europe for a summer tour in June, July and August. In September they go to Dublin, October to Switzerland and November and December to Paris.

(*Photo at left*)

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THE SAN FRANCISCO BALLET Company has received a five-year grant of $25,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation to assist its artistic development and towards the cost of new productions.

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When the **BOROVANSKY BALLET** disbanded in the usual way at the end of their season, ballerina **Peggy Sager** had an operation and then joined the Royal Academy in Australia as an adjudicator.

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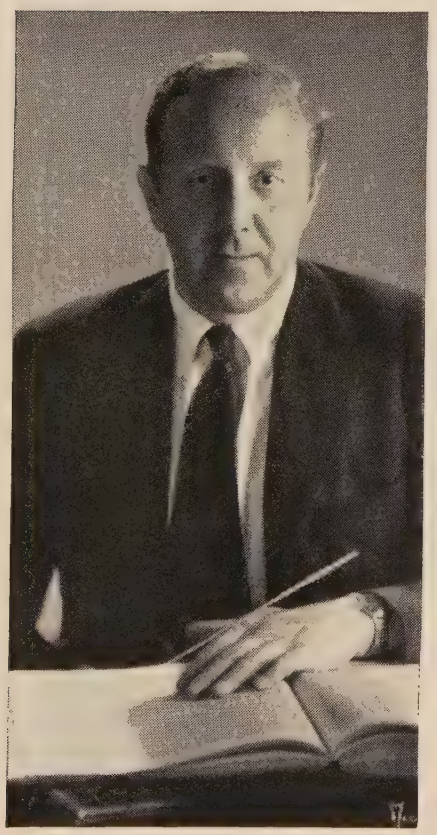
Below :

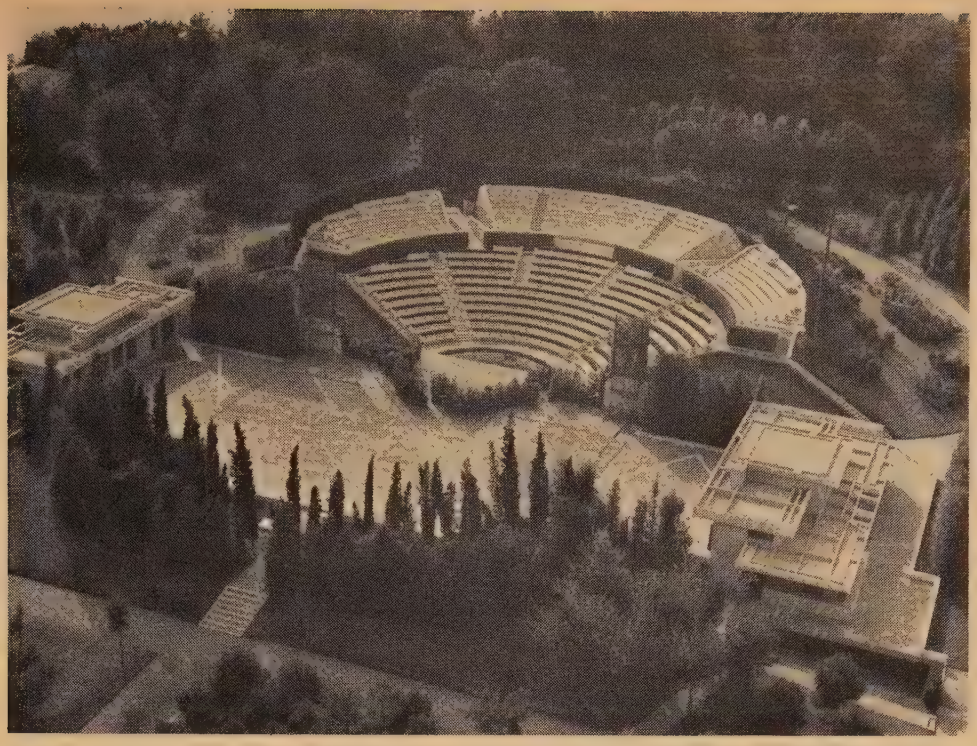
AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE director Lucia Chase with Jean Coquelle (centre) and Juan Corelli at the American Embassy in Paris during the Company's recent European tour. Corelli has a scholarship from Lucia Chase and will be with the Company in New York this autumn, the first Spaniard to work with American Ballet Theatre.

Shortly after this photograph was taken the Company lost all its scenery and costumes in a road accident when the truck containing these and all their personal effects caught fire en route for Switzerland.

The Company opened its New York season at the Metropolitan Opera House on September 16th with Alicia Markova as guest artist. New ballets include *Concerto*, *Miss Julie*, *Paean*, *Journey*, *Variations for Four* and *Pas de Deux*.



ROBERT IRVING, formerly musical director of the Royal Ballet, is now conducting the orchestra of the New York City Ballet as from its autumn season, which began on 2nd September.



A view of the stage and amphitheatre of the Teatro Verde on the island of S. Giorgio, Venice

LA SCALA PREMIERE ROMEO AND JULIET IN VENICE

SUMMER night, a purple sky studded with stars, a golden half-moon, the lovely open-air Teatro Verde on the island of S. Georgio, what more perfect setting for Ballet could be imagined ! Gentle zephyrs wafted across the Lagoon, refreshed both dancers and spectators. As I looked down on the great stage on entering the amphitheatre, I could almost imagine myself lying on the slopes of Verona watching the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet unfold itself. This new Venetian theatre, surrounded by water, must surely be unique; anyone visiting Venice should go there, feel the peace of it so completely shut off from the outside world, and if possible watch a ballet under such conditions.

This time the presenting of *Romeo and Juliet* marked an occasion of exceptional importance for, besides being a première, it constituted the beginning of a balletic alliance between the two famous Opera Houses, the Scala and the Fenice. This was brought about by the courtesy of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, the body responsible for the promotion of all cultural activities within the precincts of the island. The participation of the Fenice consisted of its orchestra, the dancers, decors and costumes all coming from the Scala.

Presumably, in order to compress the ballet within the required limits certain cuts were made, two of them being the omission of the beautiful wedding pas de deux (as given by the Bolshoi) and also of the reconciliation between the Montagues and Capulets which normally conclude the work. It was a pity also, although perhaps unavoidable, that the same permanent set with slight variations was used the whole time. No matter how magnificent the set might be (and certainly was) it becomes monotonous after a while particularly in such a work as this where change of scene is so often called for and vitally necessary. Merely to suggest such changes is not enough, and at times borders perilously on the ludicrous.

Except for the divertissements, of which there are too many, Prokofiev's music does not convince because it cannot hold the course. In the lighter moods his invention and variety are excellent, the music is eminently danceable and full of life and rhythmic interest. But when he comes to portraying the story of *Romeo and Juliet*, as distinct from its trappings, his invention peters out just when it is most needed. He pours out all his most passionate music in the balcony scene, so much so that he has nothing new to say later. For example the music during the lovely scene of Romeo's one night with Juliet prior to his flight is but a pale reminder of what has gone before. As for the final scene in the tomb Prokofiev gives little or nothing of its poignancy in his music, merely commenting in sinister vein on the action. And what a terrific opportunity has been missed here, even by Shakespeare himself because of the garbled French version that he received. For in the original story of Matteo Bandello Romeo is still alive when Juliet wakes, thus the supreme pathos of the lovers' death scene, although missed by Shakespeare, could have been shown in the ballet in perhaps the most moving and lovely pas de deux of all time.

With such music already associated exclusively with the story and by now firmly established John Cranko's choreography had perforce to follow along lines similar to those of his predecessors. Notwithstanding this handicap he has created some beautiful dances with interesting counterpoint for the corps de ballet. And his invention is well varied; for instance in the early pas de trois for Romeo, Mercutio and Benvolio he introduces the seldom seen ronde de jambe en l'air, which suits the quaint character of the dance to perfection. And the spendid dance of the cushions, in complete contrast, revealed a fine sense of showmanship allied to dignified movement.

On the other hand Cranko never tried to correct the inherent fault in this ballet:— its inevitable slowing down until it is reduced to mere spectacle and mime. On the contrary he made the wedding practically static by cutting out the dancing at this point, and it probably never occurred to him that, instead of concentrating his finest thoughts on the admittedly lovely pas de deux in the balcony scene, he might have repeated some of this music for a supreme pas de deux in the tomb scene, such as I have suggested above, and thereby securing balance at a point where it is vitally needed.

Coming to the stage fights, with the exception of that between Romeo and Tybalt they were unrealistic and childish, the same high cut and parry (beloved by people who know nothing about fencing) being repeated ad nauseam. The brawl in the first scene was pure burlesque. As for the duel between Tybalt and Mercutio, for the latter to dangle a girl on his arm as he fights was as much a psychological blunder on the part of the choreographer as was the stabbing of Mercutio in the back an error of taste. For, after all, Tybalt is a gentleman, never a sneaking assassin.

Decors and costumes by Nicola Benois were gorgeous, the lovely blending of colours having been most carefully and cleverly thought out. So brilliant and dazzling was the costume ensemble that one almost overlooked certain curious anachronisms whereby the peasants danced in Brueghel smocks and tall hats while Juliet and her friends at the party were so many Botticelli nymphs ! As for Romeo his costume was more correct but throughout the entire ballet he never once changed it, which, considering the lavishness of the production as a whole, makes one suspect that that was really just about all Benois had in mind.

LA SCALA (*contd.*)

On the first and last nights (July 26th and 28th) the roles of Romeo and Juliet were taken by Mario Pistoni and Carla Fracci. The latter is a young dancer of wonderful lightness, speed, and grace, but at the moment is too immature to portray the tremendous range of expression required for such a role as Juliet. Fracci's personality does not come across possibly because she is trying so hard to make it do so, she must learn the value of light and shade, of restraint, and not go all out right from the beginning. And her expression needs varying which applies to nearly everyone else in the cast as well. Not that she was helped in the slightest degree by Pistoni, whose portrayal of Romeo simply consisted of bouncing about the stage showing off his paces (although he is a good dancer and very strong). His far too pale make-up remained an expressionless mask throughout the performance, and his Romeo appeared to be exactly the same stupid nonentity at the end as he had been at the beginning.

The portrayal of these same roles on the second night by Vera Colombo and Giulio Perugini at once brought the whole drama to life. Equally gifted a dancer as Fracci, Vera Colombo is one of those artists so rarely found in Ballet—a consummate and subtle actress. Her performance was on the same plane as that of Ulanova, than which no higher praise could be given. The wonderful pas seul and mime in the scene where Juliet hesitates, torn by conflicting emotions, before drinking the fatal sleeping draught was so realistically portrayed by Colombo that almost one heard Shakespeare's famous lines; yet her greatest achievement was the gradual change she effected in Juliet, from the carefree girl to the woman who can no longer live once Romeo is dead.

And this time Giulio Perugini made Romeo worthy of such love. A graceful danseur noble, he acted with sincerity, ability and sympathy. Moreover, his Romeo was noble; he danced nobly, he killed Tybalt nobly, and he died nobly. With more practice his acting will improve; at present he is inclined to make Romeo stress one mood too much, that of the ardent lover. He should give more impression of gaiety in the earlier scenes, and not be too serious at the Capulets' ball. His personality comes over well.

Roberto Fascilla is a magnificent dancer, robust and powerful, with a strong personality of his own that in no way corresponded to that of Mercutio. His pas seul in the first act was good but he was altogether too much the roisterer with none of the wit and polished courtesy of the character he was trying to portray. Only after receiving his mortal wound did he become at all convincing, and for a few moments was in character.

Aldo Santambrogio was passable as Tybalt, an easy role, but those two well known artists of Diaghilev's era, Lubov Tchernicheva and Serge Grigoriev were curiously ineffective as Lord and Lady Capulet. Tchernicheva made absolutely nothing of the great moment when Lady Capulet is confronted with the corpse of Tybalt.

A special word of praise must be accorded to Elettra Morini and Bruno Telloli for their charming pas de deux in the divertissement in the third act.

Luciano Rosada conducted the Fenice Orchestra with complete mastery and great sympathy for the score. He secured a fine performance marred occasionally by faulty intonation in the horns, due, probably, to the humidity. **ROBERT PATERSON**

AUSTRALIA — PAUL MOULDS

Until last year, Australia had not seen any Ballet from overseas for many years. However a feast followed the famine. First came the trail-blazing Covent Garden group headed by Dame Margot and Michael Somes. Presenting excerpts from the Classics, they gave us the highest standard with which to compare our own very creditable Borovansky Ballet Company.

This year, the New York City Ballet brought with them a completely different style—modern ballets based on classical steps, but very different from the flowing grace of the traditional classics. Even the few dances from the older ballets they performed had in the main been recreated with Balanchine's choreography.

The Company of sixty-four dancers arrived in Australia on April 15th, having travelled by air from Japan. The opening night of the first programme was on April 17th, two days later. During this time the Company had quickly settled into the Empire Theatre, which was to be their home for the next eight weeks, and full scale rehearsals were held immediately under the supervision of Vida Brown, who is guarding the Company's high standard in the absence of George Balanchine. He has remained in America with his wife, Tanaquil Leclercq, who was stricken with Polio some time ago.

This Pacific tour is in conjunction with the International Cultural programme of the United States, and was presented in Australia by J. C. Williams Theatre Limited on behalf of the Education in Music and Dramatic Arts Society.

Prior to their arrival here, speculation was rife as to the success of the tour. Many people thought that Australians, having been nurtured by M. Borovansky on a dainty diet of standard classics with only a few, more modern works, carefully blended in, would not take kindly to the Americans' programme. Indeed, if you were to be guided by what you read in some newspapers and magazines, the tour seemed doomed to failure. However, this was not so, though some resistance must have been felt, as was indicated by a re-shuffling of programmes after the first week's performances, providing for a more liberal offering of neo-classical pieces between which to sandwich the more jarring of the modern works.

Opening night saw a large crowd spilling out of the foyers of the Empire, Sydney, on to the footpath outside. The air was one of excitement and expectation, the programme consisted of three short ballets and a classical pas des deux.

The first *Serenade*, Tchaikovsky-Balanchine, was in simple flowing style, but not outstanding. *Fanfare*, Britten-Robbins, second on the programme, was vigorous and comical, especially the percussion section of this ballet-orchestra. *Western Symphony*, a gay, bright American musical-style production, was well received, but the audience seemed to be waiting for the *Sylvia* pas de deux, which was danced by André Eglevsky and Patricia Wilde, making it the highlight of the night.

All went home happy, I am sure, but I was a little disappointed at the lack of classical finish which was all too apparent, the brilliance and polish of last year's performers being still fresh in my mind. A prominent Sydney critic writing on this point says, "Possibly they have discarded it in search of greater freedom—if they have, it's a sad error, because as Margot Fonteyn has shown us, it restricts nothing and improves everything."

The changed programme the following week passed by unacclaimed. *The Duel* presented in the third week, claimed the full attention of the critics. All agreed that Melissa Hayden's was an exceptional performance, but while some liked the drama of this Ballet, others disliked the theme, condemning it as harsh and unrealistic.

The Cage, a sensuous Ballet presented some weeks later, also stirred up much discussion as to its merits.

The fourth programme was perhaps the most satisfying although from reading down the ballets presented in this performance, one would not guess it.

The first item *Allegro Brilliante*, Tchaikovsky-Balanchine, was an abstract ballet, which squeezed the maximum amount of choreography into the restricted time. However, the dancing, while following a definite pattern, seemed entirely disconnected from the music. The corps de ballet performed majestically, the choreographer giving them no let-up from the continual vigorous dancing.

Scotch Symphony, Mendelssohn-Balanchine, captures much of the classical mood of *Les Syphides* and was the most popular of the evening's offerings, made more enjoyable by the graceful dancing of Diane Adams, and her princely partner Jacques D'Amboise, Diane Adams' floating arabesques and perfect balance, blending with her partner's superb elevation and boyish exuberance. The Corps moved in delicate precision, making this a most enjoyable Ballet.

Fransico Monican lifted a flimsy story to dramatic suspense with his inspired portrayal of the blind man in *Pastorale*, a short ballet, with music by Charles Turner.

Bourrée Fantasque, a burlesque of the elegance of classical ballet, followed by two movements justifying this elegance and nobility of tradition, was again distinguished by a precision corps de ballet which is a fully integrated part of this composition.

On May 8th, the public were treated to Balanchine's version of *Swan Lake*, but used to the traditional version usually presented here, seemed to resent this new but interesting choreography. Most ballet goers, having seen Dame Margot in this same ballet last year, were apt to try to compare the performances which was impossible.

We were treated to some thirty-odd ballets in all, five of which had been created only in the last two years. Of the dancers, Diane Adams and Patricia Wilde stood out among the ladies; André Eglevsky and Jacques D'Amboise being the most popular of the men. Young soloist, Allegra Kent, also won much praise from Australian critics for her fine interpretations in all the ballets in which she appeared.

After leaving Sydney, the Company stayed in Melbourne for a similar season, leaving Australia after a most successful tour on August 6th. While Australians will continue to enjoy the classics, this visit will give a great lift to the creative side of our Ballet, and our male dancers could well take a lesson from the Americans, emulating their athletic yet graceful style, which lends that manly expression so often lacking in the interpretations given by many male dancers.

More ballet from overseas will help us to improve our own standards, and fire the urge for a truly Australian style based on sound classical principles.

NEW YORK

—WALTER SORELL

Not less than three ballet companies have performed in September on this small island of Manhattan, and it is amazing how many ballet lovers have filled all three theatres nightly.

The New York City Ballet produced only one new entry for its four-week fall season, a pas de deux choreographed by George Balanchine to Tchaikowsky's "Waltz-Scherzo." It is a nice little work which, however, adds nothing to the stature of this great choreographer and only reminds us of his many-sided skills. In this divertissement the two dancers confined by the music and Mr. Balanchine's conception of a flowing lyric piece could not display their most breathtaking tricks. But within these limitations Patricia Wilde and André Eglevsky were technically brilliant, and Miss Wilde especially showed great understanding for the lyricism inherent in this piece. The company may have needed a new divertissement, and George Balanchine has quickly tossed it in before designing his more substantial new works featured for the winter season.

The American Ballet Theatre has come home after an exhausting tour through Europe, a tour which was not without the usual hazards and unusual adventures. In spite of the many handicaps the company opened its season at the Met in a spirit that defies defeat and holds up the tradition of good showmanship. With the exception of some noticeable tiredness here and there, the Ballet Theatre has shown a remarkable programme of six new works and a few important revivals of their repertory, particularly some Antony Tudor pieces of which *Lilac Garden* and *Pillar of Fire* have still the same lyric power, the same psychological depth that have made them classics in their field.

Herbert Ross, who has not less than three new works on the programme beside his *Caprichos*, has seemingly accepted too many tasks. Misled by Tchaikowsky's "Violin Concerto in D" he went back to the early thirties and the sprawling Massine style to offer a long piece of poor structure. The very beginning was promising, some of the movements showed his inventiveness, some of the lifts were breathtaking and tricky, but even such great dancers as Nora Kaye and Erik Bruhn felt lost in this messy ballet which, moreover, suffered from an overpowering set. Costumes and set may be stunning as a piece of craftsmanship, but they hampered rather than furthered the dance and dancer.

Paean, the second première by Herbert Ross, a ballet fashioned after verses of Sappho, is a most striking work, beautifully choreographed with a constantly absorbing and surprising singing line in praise of love. It is a truly remarkable dance evoking the spirit of antiquity and recreating the eternal pas de deux of man. The most brilliant passages can be found in the middle sections, particularly in the slow movement, "Dedication"—excellently danced by Ruth Ann Koesun and John Kriza — and also in "Visitation" in which Lupe Serrano and Michael Maule are involved in some really extraordinary movement inventions. The dancers were all made to look like statues and, though this uniform paleness added spiritually to the universality of the piece, the theatrical effect slightly suffered from it. Nevertheless, this ballet remains the superlative of pure lyricism and is a piece of danced poetry.

Paean, with Lupe Serrano and Michael Lland of American Ballet Theatre.
Photo: Maurice Seymour

In his *Tristan* Mr. Ross shows how much he is preoccupied with sex. He sometimes loses perspective and is lured into giving a too literal translation of love-making images where an allusion to it may have been far more effective. The idea of using Wagner's "Liebestod" and Thomas Mann's "Magic Mountain" as background and theme is, no doubt, excellent. This work would be compelling, would it not so often jolt the spectator into the awareness of a reality which we know exists, but which is better left the unveiled secret of two people between four walls. The two people were Nora Kaye and Erik Bruhn and both as impressive as ever. The four walls—of which one was, however, removed—were beautifully sugested by Oliver Smith's set.

Anton Dolin's *Variations for Four* has little to recommend it as a piece of competent craftsmanship. Erik Bruhn, Scott Douglas, Royes Fernandez and John Kriza are asked to go through a series of technical exhibitions and do it with more or less skill. And although particularly Mr. Bruhn's grands jetés were something to behold, the entire work makes a flat impression. The costumes were done without taste and the music by Marguerite Keogh which is quite danceable deserves a better try.

Birgit Cullberg's *Miss Julie* was one of the highlights of this fall season. Successfully done in Europe, it did not suffer any damage on its transportation across the sea nor from the drama to the dance. As a matter of fact, Miss Cullberg's dance—however faithful it remains to Strindberg—seems more effective today than the drama itself since the ballet is able to create the essence of the conflict where the drama must spell it out.

Violette Verdy is an excellent Miss Julie. The intensity of the inevitable tragedy vibrates in her from the very beginning. She dances this unhappy girl torn between sadistic passion and longing lonesomeness with great psychological understanding, and has an equally good partner in Erik Bruhn as butler. He is superb in the way he acts the victim of this sex-ridden girl, hunted and tracked down, growing in his contempt and falling back into serfdom. His dancing is as impressive as his acting.

In many ways the most exciting new piece shown by the American Ballet Theatre seems to me Kenneth MacMillan's *Journey* to Bela Bartok's music. It is an inventive dance painting a colourful picture in a strange, sombre, almost austere mood. It is interesting because if it were not for its use of the balletic idiom it could have easily been a piece created in terms of the modern expressive dance. And this may be one of the reasons why the audience's reaction is so slow in recognising Mr. MacMillan's new ballet as the great work it is. When I first saw it at a workshop performance in practice clothes about two years ago it already struck me as a powerful piece.

According to the programme notes it begins with a woman's premonitions who then is visited by Three Messengers of Death who take her on a journey to her final judgment. I am not quite sure that the music fully supports this idea. I am rather inclined to ignore the choreographer's help in suggesting his ideas to me and am doing my own interpreting. When twelve men come rolling on stage and straighten up in front of a pensive Nora Kaye, they looked to me like memories or experiences conjured up by a woman caught in her inner chaos. With three of them she becomes strongly involved in her life which turns into a searching journey through many centuries and many strange countries. It is a journey holding out beauty and fear to her, symbolising the eternal longing in man. There is no final fulfilment, only frustration and the end.

But whatever one may see in it matters little. It remains an absorbing work, ritualistic in its mystery, macabre and exciting in its four beautifully conceived movements. It gives Nora Kaye another opportunity to prove her gift for the drama.

A third company, only recently formed and for a certain purpose, has become the talk of the town. It is presented in Jerome Robbins' "Ballets: U.S.A." which was successfully shown at the Brussels' Fair and the Festival of the Two Worlds in Spoleto. It has now conquered New York. Mr. Robbins, who celebrates his 40th birthday this year, is undoubtedly the most successful and most popular choreographer today. His dance drama *West Side Story* was simultaneously running with several of his older ballets in the repertory of the two great companies, with *Interplay* being done by both, while his own evening of "Ballets: U.S.A." proved that he found a new style, a new way of expressing the spirit of our time in balletic terms. We shall have to talk about him in more detail next month.

STUTTGART

—DR. WILFRIED HOFMANN

At the present time no other opera house in Germany treats its ballet company as favourably as the Stuttgart State Opera. The number of productions, guest artists and actual performances is steadily increasing. After the première of *Le Baiser de la Fée*, *Paganini* and *Bal Champêtre* on July 5th, the company on September 7th came out with a full evening *Giselle*. A full production of *Nutcracker* and *Undine* by Henze will follow during the season. When during the Edinburgh Festival the Stuttgart Opera performed in Scotland the ballet company was left behind and managed to fill the house on seven consecutive days—displaying the whole repertoire. This besides *Les Sylphides* and *Sleeping Beauty* contains those ballets mentioned above with the exception of *Paganini* (Rachmaninov/Beriozoff) which after being virtually destroyed by a unanimous vote of all critics was dropped. *Le Baiser de la Fée* in my opinion should share the same fate since this ballet fails completely to tell its beautiful fairy tale through balletic means. Except for Scene I there is nothing enjoyable about the whole ballet. As a matter of fact, if may well serve as a model for students of choreography of how *not* to do it. Beriozoff, to be sure, moves his people around the stage, but these movements not only stay too conventional and primitive: they never reach that certain minimum of complexity which differentiates choreography and sheer arrangement. In a few instances Beriozoff does introduce enchaînements of quality. But alas ! these are only too well known to anyone who knows his way around the classical repertoire. It is especially deplorable that the Village Scene which takes place in Switzerland is not built on folklore. When Swiss country lads can't express themselves but through classical fouettés and soleils the situation becomes ridiculous. *Bal Champêtre* (Chabrier/Beriozoff) on the other hand is an unpretentious, gay little piece of pure ballet based on the atmosphere that some royal garden party during the 18th century might have had. This ballet reflects clearly all the charm, pathos and vividness of what we associate with the Rococo period, and since the music is in accord, no-one would figure that the score is a potpourri of Chabrier pieces (*Suite Pastorale*, *Danse Slave*, *Fêtes Polonaises*, and parts of the opera *Gwendolin*). One would not walk great distances to see this ballet, but if one does see it, it is truly enjoyable (except for the all too shabby and superfluous decor !). The choreography is not intricate and very repetitious, but in a generous way which proves that "par instinct nous aimons la periodicité" (Lifar). Also this ballet has met grave criticism on the grounds that it didn't do justice to the art of Rococo. This argument was to be anticipated. Germans so easily think themselves the only legitimate interpreters of Rococo. And anyone doing a Rococo-ballet to Chabrier music is doomed. Doomed by the very same people who find no fault with Strauss ballets in Venezian-Egyptian style and Stravinsky commedia dell arte ballets.

Both *Le Baiser* and *Bal Champêtre* were created by Dulce Anaya who in the meantime has gone to Munich. Her rôles have been taken over by Helga Heinrich (formerly with Orlikowsky) who made her debut in Stuttgart as première danseuse—besides Xenia Palley—on September 8th. Heinrich is a tiny dancer, brilliant and strong, coquettish and forward, an optimist on stage. She is due to dance *Giselle* during the year. Hugo Delavalle, who normally is considered as demi-caractère, has been given two great chances to establish himself as danseur noble. Both in *Bal* and in the *Giselle* Peasant pas de deux he does beautiful jetés, cabrioles and poissons and shows good pose. His weakness is in "tours" which he isn't always able to finish cleanly.

I went with great curiosity to the *Giselle* première with Margarethe Schanne and George Zoritch as guest artists, wondering what impact the Bolshoi ballet and movie might have made on a new production. The only impact recognisable—as unbelievable as it sounds—was the programme note which omits Jules Perrot and Jean Coralli entirely as choreographers, or at least contributory choreographers. Petipa and Beriozoff are given all the honours. In this production not only the ballerina, but everything else had two entirely different acts. Act I simply is unbearable ! The decor (Jochen Plänker) looks unfinished and as if it had been standing in the rain for a fortnight. While the background is done in Chinese style, the huge top-heavy castle threatens to tumble down on the audience any minute. Those two houses in front have nothing in common. *Giselle* takes place in Germany, but there is no German artist who would dare to be simple and naive and do a cosy romantic decor ! The costumes are worse. While the village girls are dressed nicely, the boys wear dresses which represent 19th century dungarees. The court looks as if it fell in a pot of red colour without having a chance to change before the performance. This kills what is left of the decor. It would not be so bad if the shade of red was noble but it is a cheap obtrusive colouring.

Act I—depending on the quality of miming and pantomime—is a complete failure. Some of the dancers perform their pantomime unorganically. The court quickly does away with it as if the dancers were ashamed of it ! And Beriozoff as Hilarion overacts to such an extent that he makes a grotesque fool of this character . Only Zoritch showed a real mastery of gesture and stood out alone in that. How easily a court loses its courtly qualities if missing the right accent in pantomime. The soloists were expected to give a first-class performance, but only Zoritch fulfilled this. Margarethe Schanne seemed not at home with the choregraphy, danced pretty much terre-à-terre and seemed at her best in adagio dancing. She failed to exploit her role surprisingly often, as when occupying the little bench all by herself, when throwing the necklace, staggering towards Albrecht or chasing with the sword. This all meant near to nothing. The Peasant Pas de Deux presented Beriozoff's newest acquisition Michéline Faure and Hugo Delavalle. Miss Faure completed her debut very well as a dancer and soloist at the same time, if one overlooks some nervousness and a tiny amount of staccato. She is now 18, and comes directly from the schools of Wood, Goubé and Rosanne in Paris.

Act II was satisfactory from every point of view. Here the corps de ballet showed experience acquired with *Les Sylphides*, the decor created milieu, Margarethe

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PARIS

—FERDINAND REYNA

THE Paris season had a noisy opening. Serge Lifar leaves the *Opêra* and Ludmilla Tcherina *L'Atlantide*.

On Wednesday, September 24, Mr. Georges Hirsch, Director of the lyric theatres of France, gathered the press together in his office to let them know the programme for the season. The first date should have been October 10 with the presentation of the opera *L'Atlantide* by the composer Henri Tomasi, which had a dancing role for the principal character Antinéa, the mysterious heroine of the celebrated novel by Pierre Benoit. Then, on that very morning, Ludmilla Tcherina told Mr. Hirsch that she was giving up the part.

In these circumstances, Mr. Hirsch told the assembled journalists, we are looking for a substitute.

In her turn, Ludmilla Tcherina informed the press in an official statement that she had taken her decision after an "artistic difference of opinion." In the first place she declared, I could not descend a stairway of thirty metres without feeling dizzy! In addition, Mr. Hirsch wanted to dress me in flesh-coloured transparent tights, which were to replace the black tights which covered me completely without other costume. I did not want to appear in this flesh-coloured costume because I thought it indecent." Mlle. Tcherina went on to attack Mr. Hirsch's ideas as a producer, calling them incoherent and tasteless and recalling that after all, the Opéra is not the Nouvelle Eve (the famous nude cabaret in Pigalle).

Henri Tomasi, the composer, in a subsequent statement to the paper *Le Monde* replied to Mlle. Tcherina saying that "For two years Mlle. Tcherina has appeared in various theatres in the role of Antinéa "in a black tight-fitting costume." Mr. Hirsch and I thought it odd to see the heroine of Pierre Benoit's drama, the queen of *L'Atlantide*, in a black costume which would make her look like a "hotel mouse" of the Fantomas era! Mlle. Tcherina refused to wear another costume and the General Administrator decided to replace her by an artist of the same standing, Claude Bessy, who was so well suited to the role."

Continued on next page, col. 1

Contd. from previons col.

Schanne produced her natural lyricism and was very well partnered by Zoritch who has to be given credit for any illusion there was of Giselle's lightness and transparent quality. Gisela Erhardt as Myrtha seems to be predestined for that role since she appears cold, cruel and unmoved. Maybe she will manage to develop a softer plié and more ballon when doing jetés, to become a really great Myrtha.

The Stuttgart Ballet's *Sylphides*—a quite satisfactory production — again starred Schanne and Zoritch, this time equally pleasing. Zoritch's performance is both masculine and poetic.

PARIS

—*Continued from col. 3, previous page*

The next day, Claude Bessy arrived at Orly from New York where she had been dancing at the Metropolitan Opera with Erick Bruhn in *La Belle Hélène* with choreography by Jerome Robbins.

The young star of the Opéra declared with confidence that without ever having seen *L'Atlantide*, she hoped to be ready for October 10th, and that Georges Skibine was entrusted with the choreography.

The crisis over *L'Atlantide* seemed thus resolved, when Serge Lifar set it off again by *refusing* to do the choreography which had formerly been entrusted to him, considering that it was impossible for him to produce the dances properly in the time the theatre management left him before October 10th.

This second "artistic refusal" took on another turn when Mr. Georges Hirsch hastened to issue a communiqué in which he declared that "on his own initiative and without waiting for Mr. Serge Lifar's decision he had entrusted the choreography of "Variation d'Antinéa" to Georges Skibine.

This brought another dramatic turn to events . . .

On October 1st, Lifar announces to the world that he is leaving the Opéra ! ! !

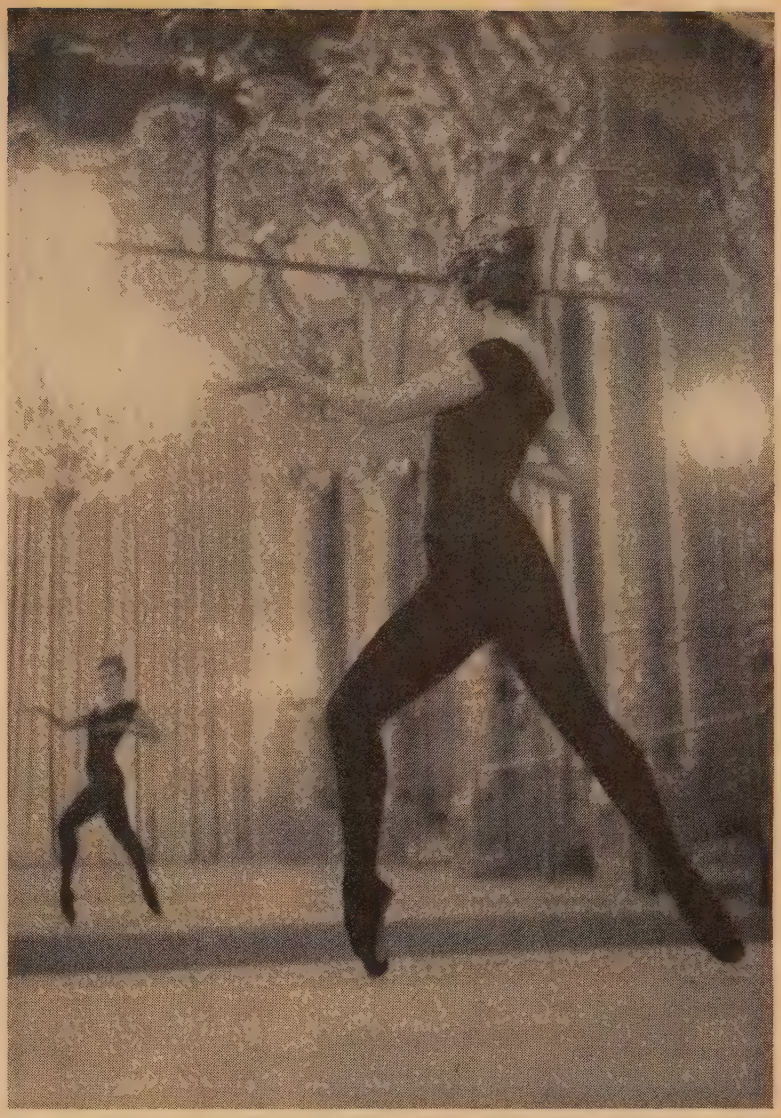
However, the reasons for his departure date back much further. It was, in fact, in May last that Mr. Serge Lifar handed in to Mr. Georges Hirsch his official resignation. Mr. Hirsch readily accepted it and thus on the expiry of the annual contract which Serge Lifar had with the Opéra management, Mr. Hirsch in a letter dated September 28th reminded him that he was no longer engaged at the Opéra from October 1st, 1958! In addition, Mr. Hirsch in a statement to the press confirmed that he would never alter his mind about the resignation of Mr. Lifar from his post as maître de ballet.

Mr. Lifar in his turn, replied and counter-attacked in these words addressed to the press:

"There were thousands of reasons why I handed in my resignation. Amongst others, there was the dismissal in February of a section of the company and I, teacher, maître de ballet and choreographer attached to the Opéra for 26 years was not even consulted. Then, the rather mysterious incidents when the Soviet Embassy refused me a visa for the U.S.S.R. and finally the presence at the Opéra of many parasites of the dance." Serge Lifar ended, "as for me, I have no other plan except to inform the Minister of the situation . . ."

These are the facts. Serge Lifar is no longer at the Opéra, but *L'Atlantide* will be presented nevertheless. As for Mlle. Tcherina one must not forget that her artistic pre-occupations were perhaps in line with her cinematographic commitments which obliged her to be in London at the beginning of October. Screen contracts are not as elastic and lend themselves to less misunderstanding than those in ballet. Before leaving Paris Mlle. Tcherina has however announced the forthcoming creation of her ballet company which is to have Milorad Miskovitch as the masculine star.

And now, what will the Minister say and do on reading the report of Mr. Lifar? . . .



A rehearsal picture of Ludmilla Tcherina in the role she did *not* dance in L'Atlantide at the Paris Opera.

END OF THE "ATLANTIDE" LIFAR-TCHERINA STORY

Punctually on October 10th, the premiere of *L'Atlantide*, music by H. Tomasi, decors and costumes by the painter Douking, after the novel by Pierre Benoit, took place at the Opera. The opera by Tomasi had a varied reception from the critics and it is not for me to speak of it here.

In *L'Atlantide* there are two danced sections, one by Serge Lifar: the ballet of the Dyns which was not particularly original and Mlle. Bessy danced three variations devised by Georges Skibine. Neither of the two choreographies followed a conventional style. However, the spectacle gave one a chance to admire Mlle. Claude Bessy in that tight-fitting, brick-red costume which Mlle. Tcherina refused to wear with all the resultant consequences. And indeed, it was worth all the disturbance. One cannot see why there was so much fuss over this *Atlantide*.

As they say in Paris, . . .
il n'y avait vraiment pas de quoi (there was really nothing it it!).

* * *

The Ballets Mexicains Aztèques et Mayas directed by Mr. Xavier de Leon, were full of good intentions, but the Parisian public did not seem to appreciate their spectacle presented at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées during September.

If the very colourful, strange and sumptuous costumes created a certain impression on the spectator, the bias towards archeological reconstruction took away the least scrap of life from these exhibitions. This was a pity because Mexico is a country extremely rich in very interesting folklore dances.

Here, in this profoundly boring spectacle, there was none of the vigour and force of these dances because of the absence of choreography as well as any really true ethnological character.

Even the celebrated "Danse du serpent à plumes" by means of which Mexican men seek to regain, by magic, contact with the powers of the earth so that it may produce the maize destined for their food, this "dance du serpent à plumes" was no more than an exhibition without vigour or force on the stage of the Théâtre des Champs Elysées.

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PROGRAMMES FOR THE MONTH

THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

1st	Nov. Sat.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes, Farron, Grant, Edwards)
4th	,, Tues.	(eve)	*The Lady and the Fool* (Beriosova, Hynd, Powell, Doyle, Burne, Rencher), *Agon* (Park, Doyle), *The Firebird* (Nerina, Hynd, Lindsay, White)
5th	,, Wed.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes, Farron, Grant, Edwards)
7th	,, Fri.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes, Farron, Grant, Edwards)
8th	,, Sat.	(mat)	*The Lady and the Fool* (Beriosova, Hynd, Powell, Doyle, Burne, Bosman), *Agon* (Park, Doyle), *The Firebird* (Nerina, Hynd, Gay, White)
11th	,, Tues.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes, Farron, Grant, Edwards)
13th	,, Thurs.	(eve)	*Noctambules* (Nerina, Lane, Grahame, Shaw Doyle, Edwards), *Rinaldo and Armida* (Beriosova, Somes, Farron, Hynd), *Mam'zelle Angot* (Nerina, Grant, Burne, Grahame)
15th	,, Sat.	(mat)	*Noctambules* (Nerina, Lane, Grahame, Shaw, Doyle, Edwards), *Rinaldo and Armida* (Beriosova, Somes, Farron, Hynd), *Mam'zelle Angot* (Nerina, Grant, Burne, Grahame)
17th	,, Mon.	(eve)	*Agon* (Park, Doyle), *Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes, Lindsay, Lane, Shaw, Edwards), (Guest Artist: May)
21st	,, Fri.	(eve)	*Agon* (Park, Doyle), *Giselle* (Nerina, Somes, Grahame, Page, Trecu, White). (Guest Artist: May)
22nd	,, (Sat.	(mat)	*Noctambules* (Page, Grahame, Wells, Shaw, Doyle, Edwards), *Giselle* (Beriosova, Ashbridge, Lane, Shaw, Edwards, Hill). (Guest artist: May)
25th	,, Tues.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes, Farron, Grant, Edwards)
28th	,, Fri.	(eve)	*Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes, Lane, Page, Shaw, Grahame, Taylor)
29th	,, Sat.	(mat)	*Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Beriosova, Ashbridge, Park, Grahame, Trecu, Dixon, Beckley)

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FESTIVAL BALLET ON TOUR

W/c 24th Nov. *Palace Theatre, Manchester*
,, 1st Dec. *Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham*

Christmas Season at London's Festival Hall from 22nd December-10th January *The Nutcracker* in its entirety.

BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR

W/c 27th Oct. *Gaiety Theatre, Dublin* (2 *weeks*)
,, 10th Nov. *Prince of Wales Theatre, Cardiff*

THE EDUARDO AND NAVARRA SPANISH DANCE GROUP

12th Nov. *Newtown*
13th Nov. *Blaenau Ffestiniog*
20th Nov. *Knighton*
21st Nov. *Barmouth*

FESTIVAL BALLET CLUB

Nov. 15th at 7.30 p.m. at 59, Sloane Street, London, S.W.1. A talk on *Choreography*, by FERNAU HALL.

GALA ALL-STAR MATINEE

At the London Coliseum, Thursday, 13th Nov., 2.45 p.m. in the presence of H.M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and H.R.H. the Princess Margaret. Proceeds in aid of The Royal Academy of Dancing.

New Books

★ MOVEMENT NOTATION

★ SCHUBERT—A CRITICAL BIOGRAPHY

★ FLOWERING LOTUS

★ BALLET OF THREE DECADES

★ BALLERINA (BY VICKI BAUM)

(*Photo on right*)

Reviewed by
PIGEON CROWLE

Movement Notation. By N. Eshkol & A. Wachmann. (*Weidenfeld and Nicolson*, 42*s*.)

For the last seven years, the authors of this book have been developing a system of movement notation. They have based it on a detailed analysis of the material provided by the dance group directed by Miss Eshkol. Both live and work in Israel.

There have been many attempts down the years to find an efficient dance notation, and, as our readers know from the various articles and reviews that have appeared on the subject in these pages, the two most successful are Labanotation and the method evolved by Rudolf & Joan Benesh. In this latest system it is claimed that every visually discernable movement of the human body can be noted on paper and that its use is not confined to any particular dance style. Also that with the three basic symbols, founded on axes of movement, used in this notation, and only patience and application, plus knowledge of all the potentialities of the human body in movement are required to master it. Whether these claims are justified, one is not prepared to say on a reading of the text—much practical investigation is necessary. But, certainly, the system appears logical and ingenious and must interest every student of dance notation. It is lavishly illustrated with many diagrams.

Schubert: A Critical Biography. By Maurice J. E. Brown. (*Macmillan & Co. Ltd*, 30*s*.).

Choreographers have always been drawn to the music of Schubert—Massine, Lichine, Zullig, Ashton, with his *Wanderer* produced during the war and containing one of his most beautiful pas de deux, and Howard with her lovely *Death and the Maiden*, are a few names that spring to mind; and two of the most delightful works in the repertoire of the Paris Opera Ballet when it visited Covent Garden, were Lifar's *Variations*, designed to display the art of the Company's ballerinas, and Lander's enchanting *Printemps à Vienne* were both inspired by Schubert's music.

This is not surprising for he was no less addicted to the dance than most Viennese of his day. "Le Congress danse, mais il ne marche pas!" wrote De Ligne of the Congress of Vienna, and this background of the waltz, ländler, galop, cotillon and ecossaise pervaded Schubert's thoughts and creative process. Though the ill-fated play *Rosamunde* contains the only music he wrote for ballet, he composed vast quantities of dance music, much of which is not even yet properly catalogued and identified. Into these pieces he put the moods and emotions of his passing days when larger works did not suit him, and much of it was the fruit of hours of improvisation at the piano while his friends danced. It was then, with a relaxed but active mind and busy fingers, and the stimulus of an *ostinato* dance rhythm, that the music welled up to be later embodied in the piano dances and developed in quartets and instrumental music.

Maurice Brown is recognised as a leading authority on this composer in England today, and his book must become the standard reference on the subject, for a clearer picture emerges of the man and his music than from any previous biography. This ardent young genius, neglected during his lifetime when he was regarded as a song writer who had failed in his attempts to master instrumental forms, and forgotten for half a century after his death, has too often become a sentimental "Lilac Time" type of figure. This false picture is dispelled and in the light of new data and modern research, a much finer and truer portrait appears. Stylishly written, this book will appeal both to the specialist and the ordinary reader.

Flowering Lotus. By H. Foster. (*Longmans, Green & Co.*, 25*s*.).

When the writer of this book was posted to Java in 1952, the newborn Republic of Indonesia was hardly four years old, but though the phase of the War of Independence was over, he still was able to see something of the vital struggle to consolidate the victory of the Revolution. From his post as Lecturer in English at the new University in Jogsakarta he, with his wife, experienced a somewhat different side of Javanese life, one that was less hectic than the political see-sawings of the capital, and less hackneyed than the beaten track of the tourist.

Though comparatively small, history has made Java the most highly developed and civilised of the thousands of islands that make up the Indonesian Archipelago, and during their four years there, the Fosters fell under the spell of this fascinating and mysterious island. This book is the account of their life there as they got to know the country and its people. Sometimes the telling is a little humdrum but on the whole a colourful enough picture is presented of Javanese life and customs with its mixed heritage, its institutions both social and political, its puppet dancers and dance forms. The pages devoted to the dance do not pretend to do more than glance at what was mainly an aristocratic art, stemming from India, and based on the epic dramas of the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. Today, the practice of the court dances is not confined to the palace and an organisation founded by one of the princes has spread the art to wider circles, preserving at the same time the tradition of Jogja dancing.

A visit to Bali revives memories of that triumphant tour of the West by the Balinese dance-troupe and their season at the Winter Garden Theatre in London. The brilliant Sampih came to a tragic end, but the Fosters meet that bright humming bird, Ni Gusti Raka, the star of the troupe, and her fellow dancers, Oka and Anom. One of the girls is asked what she thought of the ballet at Covent Garden, visited when they were in London. She hesitated as she tried to find the right words to express her meaning and then—"it seemed rather like . . . a sport," she said !

Ballet of Three Decades. By Audrey Williamson. (*Rockliff*, 25*s*.)

This is the first book Audrey Williamson has written on ballet for over eight years, her interest apparently having been diverted to the straight theatre and music. However, her detailed assessment of the work covered by that period reveals that, in common with most of us taken by the virus, she has been unable to remain long away from the pleasures and miseries of ballet-going.

In giving a remarkably clear picture of the ballet scene in this country during the past thirty years, there is a full account of the Russian companies before the war, the birth and rise of our own ballet companies, the war years, and then the exciting post-war period (with its visits from so many foreign ballet companies), which proved that the ballet boom was not merely a form of war escapism but the sudden quickening, owing to favourable circumstances, of a firmly established growth that has always found the English climate congenial.

Miss Williamson has a fine critical mind combined with a technical knowledge that is not confined to ballet alone but extends to the other arts. Therefore, she is able to take that more comprehensive view so essential to ballet criticism but, unfortunately, not very prevalent. One may not always agree with her judgments, but they are invariably stimulating and provoke intelligent discussion.

English ballet has made a vigorous and individual growth but "reaches a level today in which it is richer in spectacle, full of dancing talent, yet lower altogether in creative aim and achievement. "Are we", she asks "like the Romantic Period of great dancers with too many myths and fairy tales which did not survive them, heading for a decline?" Personally, I do not think so. I feel that a ballet repertoire that ranges from *The Burrow* to *Prince of the Pagodas* is catholic enough, but that the great danger comes from our younger choreographers and spikey dancers in their lack of heart, their entirely intellectual approach. But I agree that today's popularity with a

Continued next page, column 1

greater and unknowledgeable public has its pitfalls. Audiences need educating. This book will do much to help.

Ballerina. By Vicki Baum. (*Michael Joseph*, 15*s*.)

During the intervals of a crisis in her life when her marriage appears to be breaking up, the forty-six year old ballerina of an American company (she became "a famous prima ballerina" at twenty-three) relives various moments of her career—especially her more highly-coloured love affairs.

It is all very bright, hard and slick, but though lushness and intensity are not good substitutes for warmth and humanity, Miss Baum, who knows her market, also knows how to tell a story, and does in some ways get under the skin of a touring ballet company.

New Books received at time of going to press

The Ballet Annual, and *Red Curtain Up* (by Beryl Grey) to be reviewed next month.

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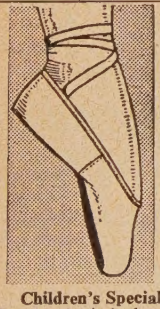

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NEW RECORDINGS

ROMEO AND JULIET

Whether you want *Brigg Fair* to "build up" the score of Tudor's ballet or not, this record of Delius' works, HMV ALP1586, is one that none of us can afford to miss. Beecham is the only conductor who gets to the very heart of this great composer—one of the immortals—and here, gives us renderings of *On hearing the first Cuckoo, Summer Night on the River, A Song before Sunrise*, etc. besides *Brigg Fair*, which will probably not be equalled in our lifetime. Recording excellent.

THE BIRDS

There was much speculation before the first night of Helpmann's ballet, *The Birds*. It was successful to a point for it was to be his answer to the criticism that he was unable to create in the classical idiom. A very good reminder of those days is Pye's recording, PVL7051, of Respighi's score and his *Botticelli Triptych*, on which Franz Litschauer, the conductor, has spent much thought and I am sure it will satisfy most of my readers.

CZECH POLKAS AND DANCES

This is a delightful record of Smetana's works based on or taken from his country's folklore, Capitol P8372. Much of it is gay and happy music with sufficient contrast to make it interesting. Rudolf Firkusny, the well known Czech pianist, puts each dance across with all the necessary verve or delicacy to show it off. The recorded tone is very good.

CONCERTI

Oiseau-Lyre's attractive disc, OL50143, of oboe concertos of Alessandro Marcello, Alessandro Scarlatti, Albinoni and Vivaldi can be thoroughly recommended. The oboe is entrancing—Pierre Pierlot's beauty of tone, agility and smoothness place him in the topmost rank and de Froment's conducting supports him at every turn. The recording engineers must also be congratulated for their part. Lichine's ballet, *Concerti*, set to Marcello's work, is not of the same standard but it is nevertheless, danced very charmingly by the London Festival Ballet Company.

SEA CHANGE

Sibelius' *En Saga* must have been a great source of inspiration to Cranko for he built round it his successful ballet, *Sea Change*—a dramatic work which gave good scope to Sheila O'Reilly's acting ability. There are many interpreters of Sibelius but very few are satisfactory. Anthony Collins is one of these, and besides *En Saga*, gives us well thought out and controlled performances of *The Swan of Tuonela*, *The Karelia Suite* and the *Romance in C* on HMV ALP1578.

SLEEPING BEAUTY

The Columbia issue, 33SX1095–6, of George Weldon and the Philharmonia Orchestra replaces the HMV recording of Irving's. The items are almost identical and they virtually cover the complete ballet as danced by the Royal Ballet. Weldon does not get as much out of the score as he might but even so it is so fine, so beautiful in itself that you cannot fail to find a great deal of pleasure in it. And to help, the recording is definitely good.

BEDFORD CROWLE

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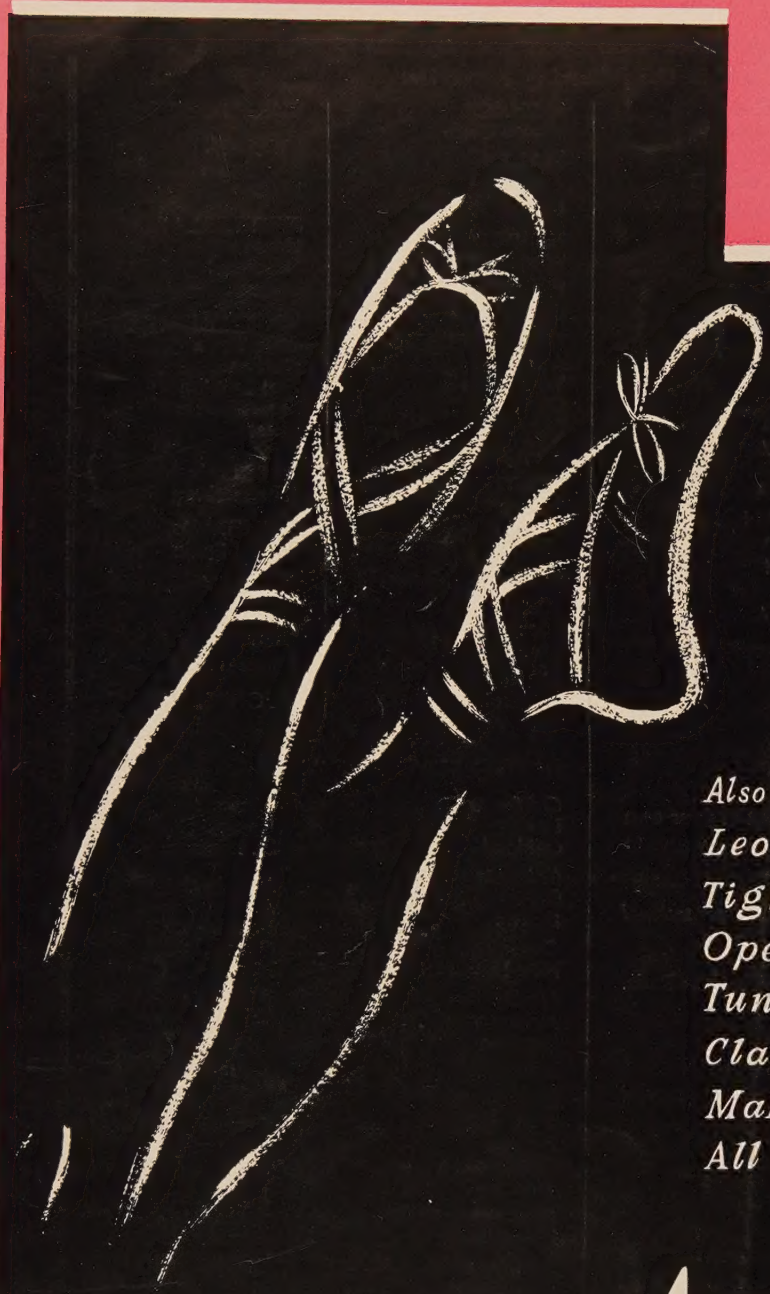

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